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EDITED BY  
**CLINTON ROGERS WOODRUFF**  
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# THE SOCIAL CENTER

EDITED BY

EDWARD J. WARD

ADVISER IN CIVIC AND SOCIAL CENTER DEVELOPMENT, UNIVERSITY  
EXTENSION DIVISION, THE UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN



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## PREFACE

"It is necessary that simple means should be found by which, by an interchange of points of view, we may get together, for the whole process of modern life, the whole process of modern politics, is a process by which we must exclude misunderstandings, \* \* \* bring all men into common counsel and so discover what is the common interest. That is the problem of modern life which is so specialized that it is almost devitalized, so disconnected that the tides of life will not flow.

"There is no sovereignty of the people if the several sections of the people are at loggerheads with one another. Sovereignty comes with coöperation. \* \* \*

"You say and all men say that great political changes are impending in this country. Why do you say so? Because everywhere you find men \* \* \* determined to solve the problems by acting together, no matter what older bonds they may break, no matter what former prepossessions they may throw off, determined to get together."

These sentences are taken from the address of Governor Wilson upon citizenship organization and the use of the schoolhouse as the neighborhood center of this

all-inclusive association, given at the opening of the First National Conference on Social Center Development, one year before his election to the Presidency of the United States.

Among a group of men who gathered after the meeting, one said: "With the powerful coöperation of Woodrow Wilson as President, it is not impossible that the basic program of the social center—the self-organization of the voting body into a deliberative body to supplant party divisions—may be effected in one administration."

During the campaign which resulted in the election of President Wilson he repeatedly referred to the social center opportunity, speaking of it as of fundamental and inspiring importance. Moreover, this idea was lifted during the campaign far above being merely a party project by the fact that Colonel Roosevelt strongly urged the logical procedure of shifting the polling places into the schoolhouses and then making them the deliberative as well as voting headquarters of district political organization, "the senate chambers of the people," and President Taft, following the example of Justice Hughes, of the United States Supreme Court, who, when governor of New York, said of the social center movement: "I am more interested in what you are doing and what it stands for than anything else in the world," authorized the hearty approval of this plan by the chairman of the national Republican committee.

The unanimous endorsement of the social center idea

by these party leaders and by such bodies as the National Education Association has been accompanied by the beginning of social center development in so many communities throughout the country that the rapid equipment of the whole citizenship with this means of its intelligent self-expression seems assured.

To aid in the recognition of the social center opportunity is the purpose of this volume.

E. J. W.

University of Wisconsin,  
November, 1912.





## INTRODUCTION

This volume is the outcome of years of thought and personal activity on the part of Edward J. Ward. While some of the chapters are the contributions of other pens than his, I am sure all will be willing to admit that the inspiration for these contributions was Mr. Ward's.

As director of recreational facilities at Rochester, Mr. Ward was able to develop the social center idea in a number of Rochester schools as he so vividly portrays. With this as a background he has carried forward a propaganda which has reached every part of the country and has resulted in the three great national parties indorsing the idea during the recent presidential campaign.

This volume is the outcome of the consideration given to the whole subject at the Buffalo meeting of the National Municipal League and includes not only the ripe product of Mr. Ward's thought, but the advice and suggestions of his colleagues who have also thought long and worked steadily for the advancement of the idea. Within the past two years Wisconsin has required the school boards to make free and adequate provision for the use of school houses as neighborhood headquarters for political discussion. As this introduction is being written early in the year, the prospects are that a very

considerable number of other states 'will follow the precedent thus established and within the year it is more than likely that Mr. Ward's fight will be practically won with only the details to be worked out. Briefly stated, Mr. Ward believes with all his heart and urges, with all his abundant force and vitality, that the school house, being community property, should be utilized for community purposes. It should be the polling place, and before that the place for the discussion of political ideas. It should be the social center of the community for adults and children alike. In fact, it should be the animating civic factor in the community.

The editor of the National Municipal League series has unusual pleasure in sending forth this volume as a source of information and inspiration to the growing list of workers for democratic municipal government in this country. It has a fitting place in the series, providing as it does for the formulation of that sound public sentiment without which there can be no true and permanent success in the matter of self-government.

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# THE SOCIAL CENTER

## CHAPTER I

### DISCOVERY—NOT CREATION

✓ The social center of any community is the common gathering place, the head-and-heart quarters, of the society whose members are the people of that community. ✓

✓ The proposal to have in every neighborhood in America an institution wherein people may and will gather of right, across all different lines of opinion, creed and income, upon a common ground of interest and duty, just as neighboring citizens, is not a new project. ✓ On the contrary, such an institution not only is now established, but it is the fundamentally and supremely essential institution of our government. ✓ Democracy would be impossible without such a converging point in each community. ✓ Whatever changes we may make in the machinery of public business administration, the common neighborhood gathering place, the social center, must remain—the permanent institution of America. ✓

Our established unit of neighborhood is the voting precinct. The established neighborhood social center is the polling place. The United States is divided into neighborhoods, districts small enough so that all of the electors in each district may come to a common center.

The large Society of America, whose representative headquarters or capitol is at Washington, is divided into little neighborhood societies, whose headquarters or capitols—not representative but immediate—are the polling places. The active membership of the Association of America is divided into neighborhood association memberships, which are enrolled upon the voting registers at the polling places.

✓Recently there have sounded urgent calls for “citizenship-organization.” These have been spoken by men who see the imperative necessity of vitalizing the common bond of civic obligation and so strengthening the cord upon which all the beads of a democratic civilization are strung.✓ For instance, William Burnett Wright of Buffalo, who as a city councilman and as a member of the state legislature of New York, has studied at first hand the problem of protecting the welfare of a disintegrated public against the encroachments of united private interests, says:✓ “The private interests are organized; therefore they get things.✓ Only when the citizenship is organized will the public interest be conserved.” In an article entitled “The Organization of the Electorate,”\* William Watts Folwell says: “If democracy is to survive and provide good government it must become organic, constitutionally organic. Electors must be visibly and physically associated, and possess an apparatus by which they can coöperate effectively.” Both these men, and others who are conscious of a fundamental lack in the machinery of democracy, make this proposal of citizenship-organization as though it were an entirely new project, as though there were now no established integrating and articulating center of such organization. In-

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\* *Review of Reviews*, April, 1912.

deed, Professor Folwell says: "Now our American electors have no legitimate organization, form no society."

It may be that the authors of these proposals live in neighborhoods whose voting places are located in livery stables or barber shops, so that, on account of the environment of the established civic headquarters, they fail to recognize in it the uniting social center which makes of the citizenship within the area of its use the actually connected membership of a real corporate body.

Whether the fact that the polling places in Mr. Wright's and Professor Folwell's neighborhoods may be located in a livery stable, a barber shop, or a temporary shack set up in the street, has anything to do with their ignoring the presence of this articulating center of citizenship-organization, it is unquestionably true that the failure on the part of the average citizen to appreciate the civic bond as a living union, an active membership in a vital, wealthy, powerful and tremendously responsible fraternal organization, is in part due to the fact that the neighborhood headquarters of this organization is usually not permanently housed in a fittingly dignified and worthy building.

Ask the average man to name the headquarters of government in this country, this state, this town; he will probably name the capitol at Washington, then the state house, then the city or town hall. It is as though the political authority still came down from above, through a sovereign at the national capitol ordained and commissioned from up in the air, down to the state capitols, and on down to and through the town halls to the people. The idea that our machinery for getting our public or association business done is something *above* us to which it is our duty to bow, is expressed in our use of the word

*government* in speaking of our great coöperation. The word suggests the authority of a superior will imposed upon a subject whose duty it is simply to obey, to submit, to be governed. The connotation that the relation of the individual to the nation is one of filial subordination, as though there were at the head of the American household a political father to be obeyed, is implied in our speaking of national devotion as *patriotism* (from *pater*, father). The same suggestion of a political being above us, not paternal this time, but royal, is in the word *loyalty*, which, as we use it in speaking of our feeling toward the nation, suggests not an outreaching, unlimited fellowship identification, but an upward looking devotion as to a king. While we no longer speak of our public officials as rulers, yet something of this idea remains in our calling the executive officers of our state associations *governors*. And in the cities the old subordinate attitude is plainly expressed when we refer to the members of our committees on municipal business as *city fathers*, implying that we who engage them in our service are city children. And we still call judges, *magistrates* (from *magister*, master), and their umpirings, *decrees*. Consistent with this idea of the government as something above us is our speaking of the rules of procedure, upon which, either directly or through our agents, we agree, as laws "handed down." And consistent with this idea is our common attitude toward taxes as being "imposed" like tribute instead of being our coöperative investment, "chipped in" to purchase at wholesale benefits which each of us can use without having the bother or expense of owning individually. In a word, we think of the flag as though it were a symbol of something *above* us, instead of the symbol of the vital connecting something *between* us.



Now, this attitude toward the government as though it were something over the citizenship is, of course, the persistence of the habit of thought developed in monarchical and feudal days, when to be a member of a nation was to be the subject of a king, the liegeman of a lord. Obviously, this upward look, whether of reverence or of fear, toward the government as above, is quite contrary to the democratic idea. But so long as these ties held unweakened, so long as we kept unquestioningly, this respectful, childish deference toward the source of authority in the political parenthood of the government, this common reverence was the means of our unity as a people.

But slowly the filial sense of subordination under the government as a power above is giving way. The upward running ties of reverence by which we here held together in a common attitude of awe, as children under a parent, are being cut through, worn out, denied by our growing sense of democracy; and with their cutting our old unity is going. Politically orphaned, we are becoming conscious that, like children when the parental protection and authority is gone, we must assume to be grown up now, for the responsibilities of ordering the household are *ours*. Consciously, or unconsciously, we are losing the unity of obedience; how shall we find the unity of agreement? We are losing the unity of a family; how shall we find the unity of a fellowship? We are losing the unity of subordination; how shall we find the unity of coördination? We are losing the binding obligation of reverence for law; how shall we find the binding obligation of accord? We are losing the unity of followers; how shall we find the unity of fellows? We are losing the unity of common dependence; how shall we find the community of interdependence?

How? The way is plain, for in another form this is exactly the same problem which confronted our ancestors when the old filial unity among the colonies in their common subordination to Great Britain was removed, and they found the way of establishing the ground of fraternal unity among the orphaned commonwealths.

Before 1776, the separate colonies in this country had no serious difficulties in getting on peacefully together: they were kept from squabbling among themselves by the fact that, as with children in a household, when the parent is at hand, they had the recognized authority of Great Britain over them to settle disputes and keep them in order. Theirs was the unity of immaturity, of dependence, of obedience, of subordination. The colonies were children, and like children they grew up, came to a time when they questioned the parental authority and, arriving at adulthood, denied it, and cut those common upward running ties of reverence and obedience in which they had found their former unity.

Then came "the critical period" of American History. The old unity of dependence, obedience, subordination to authority gone; how did they, those individual colonies, adjust themselves to the responsibilities of their adulthood? How did the old loyalism become the new fraternity? How did they learn the obligation of agreement in place of the old reverence for the king's decree?

The problem of adjustment between sovereign individuals and the problem of adjustment between sovereign groups of people may seem different, but they are not different, for every individual person is, in the diversity of his moods, a commonwealth, every commonwealth is a person. The problem which our ancestors had in finding a new basis of right relationship

among the commonwealths, which had ceased to be colonies, was exactly the great problem of democracy which confronts us—the problem of finding a basis of right relationship among citizens who have ceased to regard themselves as subjects. Their solution must be ours.

How did they bring it about, that instead of continuing the weakness of disintegration, the slavery of suspicion, the imbecility of competition among the colonies, there was developed the strength, the freedom, the dignity of ordered coöperation? How did they bring it about that intercolonial disputes came to be settled by orderly discussion together instead of disorderly separation and appeal to force? How did they bring it about, that the very points in which the colonies differed—such matters as the coinage—became matters to get together over instead of matters to separate over, to unite upon instead of to fight about, links instead of wedges?

It was not by the mere appeal to the sentiment of sympathy, of mutual respect, or brotherhood among the colonies. That sentiment came among those commonwealths as it comes among individuals, not as a cause of their coördination, but as a result of their coördination. It is significant and suggestive that the League of Friendship proved insufficient.

✓ The solution of the problem was found in the creation of machinery for the orderly presentation and free discussion of the questions over which, without this machinery, the commonwealths had begun to resort to the more primitive appeals to force. It was the establishment in the midst of the colonies of an institution not belonging to any one or group of them, but belonging to all of them, a common ground of understanding. It was the setting up of machinery by which, when their

opinions differed, they might, in resolving these differences, *use* their heads instead of losing them.

The colonies differed in political opinion, in religious beliefs, in economic interests, in manners of living, and in tastes. But the frictions, deceptions, hostilities, which vexed them in their relations to one another, began to disappear just as soon as the machinery which invited intelligent discussion and coöperation among them was constructed. The results of misunderstanding between them began, as a matter of course, to vanish, as soon as there was established a common ground on which they might find a basis of understanding. To be sure, this society of the commonwealths which they established, this coördinated union of the states which they affected was later strained by the attempted revolt of a part of its members, who, holding to the beautiful, but impractical anarchist philosophy of the right of the minority not only to be heard, but to control, attempted to secede from the association when the majority of its members decided against their desire. But, with the exception of this one point of disagreement between the states, all the problems of their relations with one another were in the way of peaceful adjustment when a common ground of meeting and orderly coöperation, an intercolonial social center, as headquarters for this society of the commonwealths, was instituted.

Now the problem of bringing the order, efficiency, economy of effort, and strength of a united citizenship out of the present inter-individual chaos must find its solution by the same method in which the order and strength of the United States was brought out of the chaos of disunion, antagonism, and weakness of the dismembered colonies. Being associated as neighbors, they—the colonies—formed an orderly neighborhood

association with a common headquarters, an association which included all of them in an equality of membership. Being interdependent, they recognized their interdependence, and through coördination brought it about that points of contact became points of connection instead of points of collision.

The keenest thinking of this past fifty years has been devoted to devising machinery by which *things* should work together for good, by which mechanical forces should be combined for the service of man. We have learned that not only the apparently useless but even destructive forces may be so directed as to produce good, provided the machinery is properly constructed. The water pressure which might mean the devastation of the valley, converted into directed power, by the construction of right machinery, means its life. It is strange, indeed, that we have been so slow to recognize that the solution of our problem of right adjustment among individual citizens lies practically in the construction of machinery by which *folks* may work together, think together, act together for good, when in the establishment of this coördinating machinery was found the solution of the first problem of our existence as a nation. The colonies did not just try to like each other; they established a social center, wherein it would be possible to get together on common ground, to disagree agreeably under rules which guaranteed each an opportunity to be heard. They constructed a headquarters of coördination and found it to be a means of coöperation. And incidentally when they did, they found, of course, that most of the unpleasant things that they had thought about each other were not so.

The states in their establishment of a common ground of all-inclusive organization for orderly discussion of

matters of difference and for coöperation furnish the model upon which international organization is beginning to be established in the institution of the world's social center at The Hague. The states in their development of a common institution as headquarters of an all-inclusive organization for orderly comparison of different opinions and for peaceful compromising of differences of interest and for uniting of effort upon rules and policies in which agreement is secured, furnish the model for the inter-individual organization of the neighborhood—the development of the social center in every community in America. The principle is exactly the same and the method is the same, whether the different opinions and interests are those of individuals, of states, or of nations. The peaceful adjustment of differences, and the possibility of coöperation depend upon the establishment of a common ground of orderly discussion. Machinery is necessary for coördination, and coöperation is not expectable without coördination.

✓ This identity in principle of the problem of adjustment of different interests and of its solution through the establishment of a common central machinery, whether among individuals in the little community or among nations in the neighborhood of the world, was immediately grasped by the Baroness Bertha Von Suttner on her recent visit to America, in which she said: "I was thrilled when I learned of this movement to make the schoolhouses neighborhood civic and social centers. In principle this is exactly the same movement as the one to which I am giving my life. To secure better understanding between the citizens of a neighborhood, through the use of a neutral place, and so fine a place as the American public schoolhouse, is the local expression of the great idea of international federation through the

increasing use and centering of power in a common place where discussion of differences shall replace prejudice and appeals to force."

Now, the problem of inter-individual organization as a means to the orderly progress of our democratic society is simple, for the neighborhood social center is, as has been said, already established in the voting place, which is now the focal point of active membership, of interest and duty of all of the citizens within each neighborhood, the means by which the members of each community are now vitally coördinate, the means also by which the members of each neighborhood group are connected directly and effectively with the memberships of all other neighborhoods in city, county, state, and nation.

✓The problem is, therefore, not to establish the unifying means of our citizenship organization, but first to recognize it, and then, appreciating its significance, to magnify it, and about it, as a living nucleus, to develop such an institution as will furnish the ground of orderly, peaceful comparison of our opinions and compromising of our differences of interest, such an institution as will invite our coöperations, such an institution as will make the common interest interesting.

Obviously, the first practical step is the housing of the voting instrument, machine, or ballot box in each neighborhood in a dignified and permanent building, which shall be worthy to stand as the headquarters of democratic coöperation, the place of final authority in America.

A very considerable part of our slowness in adjusting our thought to the idea that the source of political authority in this country is not up in the air somewhere above the capitol at Washington, and an even greater



reason for our slowness to realize that the final place of authority is in our civic coöperation as neighbors, is in the fact that we have kept the old monarchical manner of building our public buildings—ranging down in magnificence and dignity of architecture from the central capitol, monumentally constructed as though closest to the source of authority, through the state houses and the city halls, and finally dwindling to nothing permanent or dignified here among the citizens.

The instrument of voting, the ballot box, of course, is the supreme tool of government, for the securing of which mankind has struggled and fought, sacrificed and climbed through the ages, and in the intelligent use of which the chief hope of the orderly progress of the race centers. It is the place where is expressed the *con-sent*, the together feeling, the uniting will, the sympathy, and the purpose of America. If any institution in the world should be housed with architectural dignity, it is the neighborhood voting center.

Indeed, it has been proposed that worthy "precinct" buildings be erected. And when one thinks that there are buildings erected to serve as headquarters of every sort of trivial, fragmentary, sectional organization; and when one remembers that there are public buildings now provided for the gathering of the members of all subordinate public bodies, aldermen, state legislators, congressmen to vote upon the community matters within their respective spheres, the proposal of erecting in each district a worthy building as voting headquarters of the fundamental organization of American citizenship would be justified, if there were not a more fitting and worthy building now constructed and capable of being used to house the citizenship gathering to vote.

Besides the voting precinct, there is another unit of



neighborhood in this country—the public school district. At the approximate center of each of these unit neighborhoods is a public building so located as to be within convenient reach of the children, and therefore of all the people of the neighborhood. This building in its present use as an educational place for children is not necessarily a social center, for not all of the children in every neighborhood gather in the public schoolhouse. Lines of religious, financial, and other difference are recognized in the children's segregation for formal training; a part of the children in some neighborhoods go to private institutions of various kinds. But the building itself is a common one, and, whether any citizen sends his children to this neighborhood house or not, he shares equally with all of the other citizens in the community of its ownership.

✓ Now, the reason why the schoolhouse, rather than a specially constructed building, should be used as the place of civic coöperation in voting, is not merely because of the economy of the plan, which has been demonstrated in large cities as well as rural communities, nor because of the convenience in using an easily accessible building whose location is known, but because, even though a building to house the civic headquarters were constructed with all the triumphant architectural dignity which this institution of the voting place suggests, it could never gather about itself the significance of common obligation for the future which is embodied in the schoolhouse.

Every question upon which Americans vote is finally a question of the selection of such servants, and such decision of issues as will mean a better environment for the children of Americans next year, next century. The voter goes to the ballot box to control and improve the

future. His interest at the ballot box, if it is true and normal, is in the child. Whether the man has children of his own or not, when he goes to the voting place it is not only to coöperate in the fellowship of control as a partner in charge of America for to-day, but it is also, and far more significantly, as a parent deciding what America shall be to-morrow for those who are children to-day. This civic parentalism, finding expression at the voting place and giving to the ballot box its highest and deepest significance, cannot be expressed in any other building. It is expressed in the essential nature of the characteristic building of America, the public school-house.

Every one of these neighborhood public buildings, as it stands to-day, is capable of being used as a polling place, a gathering place for the neighbors' participation in the control of America, a convenient and worthy headquarters for the established district organization of the electorate.

The detail, as to the part of any particular schoolhouse which may be used as the permanent voting headquarters of the neighborhood, depends, of course, upon the plan and equipment of the building. If, as is very rapidly coming to be the case, there is a first-floor neighborhood or community room, a combination gymnasium and assembly hall, with an entrance directly from the street, this, or a smaller room in connection with this, is the suitable place. Where such a ground-floor assembly hall or community room does not yet exist, any ground-floor room, or even the corridor, may be used. In Grand Rapids, Michigan, where the school buildings have been used for voting for a number of years, the kindergarten room is the part of the building used. In school-houses where there is no room on the ground floor in

which there are not seats, the plan is followed of placing the desks on "skids," thin strips of hard wood, three or four seats and desks together, and moving them back while the room is in use for voting. In Los Angeles, in some cases the wide corridors or halls are used in those buildings which have no community room. In the one-room rural schoolhouse, there is easily found room; for, as a rule, voters come only one or two or three at a time, so that there is but small space required. As to the disturbance to the children in the regular school work, this has been found easily obviated, even where class-rooms are used. But all of the difficulty in improvising the voting place is temporary, for the tendency to regard no school building as complete which has not a community hall in connection with it is so strong that not only are new schoolhouses being built with such rooms included in the plans, but in several places in the country ground-floor combination assembly halls and gymnasiums are being added to existing schoolhouses.

The more important detail as to the personnel of the election clerk will be considered in the next chapter in the discussion of the work of the civic secretary. It is here sufficient merely to say that the shifting of the machinery of voting from the haphazard location which it now occupies into the established neighborhood public building, implies the changing of the office of the voting teller or clerk from its present miscellaneous and temporary character to that of one of the established functions of the competent and responsible public servant.

In the movement for making the schoolhouse the voting headquarters, the municipal economy, efficiency, scientific management argument is the one first spoken as a rule. And this argument is so obvious that it scarcely needs stating. Here are the buildings, con-

veniently located, lighted, heated, belonging to the public, and ready to be used. The cost of building, transporting, setting up, heating, lighting, taking down, and retransporting and storing voting booths, or, where these are not used, the cost of rental in private buildings is an item of expense considerable enough to justify the claim of stupid extravagance if not petty betrayal on the part of any administration. It has been estimated that something more than seven thousand dollars is saved each year through the use of the schoolhouses as polling places in a city of four hundred thousand population. Of course the amount saved each year tends constantly to increase with the inevitable increasing frequency of special, primary, and regular elections. Certain it is that in the average city the amount saved through the use of the schoolhouses for voting is enough to pay a considerable share of the cost of supervision for the beginning of the systematic development of their full use as complete social centers.

Of course, in those parts of the country which have moved on from government by a sex, the desire to have a clean, decent place, for voting, has much to do with the use of the schoolhouses for this purpose. For instance, the first election in which women participated was the first election in which the schoolhouses were used for voting in Los Angeles. Of course, it is pleasant for one who is asked whether he would like to have his wife or mother go to a livery stable to vote, to be able to reply that he would see no objection to his wife or his mother going to a schoolhouse to vote. But just why women should care more than men should care to have clean surroundings at the polling place is not apparent.

But neither the people who object to seeing public

money wasted, nor the people who have a taste for decent cleanliness, and who, for these reasons only, favor the use of the schoolhouses for voting, are exerting as strong an influence in this direction as the school men and women. When, for instance, in the city of Milwaukee, the question whether the schoolhouses should be used as polling places was referred to the school principals, the vote in favor of the project was unanimous. The reason is obvious. The great central object of the training of youth is the development of good citizenship; the great difficulty is in the visualizing of the business of democracy; the operation of voting is the practical first-hand civic expression, which, if the scholars can see it, makes for them a point of contact from which they may go on to the understanding of the civic process as a reality, and to have the voting done in the schoolhouse is convenient, because it does away with the necessity of taking the children away from the building to witness it. Moreover, the schoolhouse has an added meaning, dignity, and significance to the pupil through its being used for voting.

But even the educational value to the school in its prime service of using the building as the voting center in each neighborhood does not mark its fundamental importance. This lies in the fact that when the voting precinct lines are made identical with the school district boundaries, then the two units of neighborhood in this country become identical, and the basic organization of the electorate in each neighborhood finds itself equipped with a social center which is not only a point, but is also a building capable of being used for gathering to decide upon appointments to the common service and upon issues.

When the schoolhouse in each district is made the

permanent voting headquarters, the capitol of the citizenship organized for decision, the principle is established in such a way as to be easily understood that the wider uses of the schoolhouse as a community building are limited neither by age lines nor by sectarian or other differences. There may be several schools which different groups of children in any neighborhood attend, but there is only one voting place in any neighborhood. At the ballot box there is "neither Jew nor Greek, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free, but all are one" in the uniting adventure of making America make good.

When the ballot box is placed in the schoolhouse, this building becomes, for all its possible wider uses, the real social center; and the way is clear and the means are at hand for supplying the fundamental and supreme lack in the machinery of democracy.

## CHAPTER II

### DELIBERATION—THEN DECISION

It would be worth while to locate the polling place in the school building; even though that son of perdition who is the father of partition were to be allowed to continue ruling our preparation for the use of the common ballot box; even though that party spirit which Washington called the "worst enemy" of a democracy were to continue to dominate the time before elections; even though the supreme jury of the citizenship were to keep on making its preparation to render final verdict on public questions by separating into noisy factions instead of by calmly sitting together with fair hearing and free discussion in judgment; even though the furnishing of information upon which the public may wisely decide the questions of its welfare were to continue to be given over entirely to private, self-interested, and irresponsible individuals and groups; even though it were to be kept true that "the 'will of the people' is an emotional reaction actuated and controlled by the 'committee on rumor'";\* even though membership in the district body of citizens, the direct means of coördinate fellowship in the supreme body of the government, were to continue to be treated as though it were less important than membership in any private society; even though, in a word,

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\* Frederick A. Cleveland, of the President's Commission on Economy and Efficiency.



the neighborhood organization of the electorate were to use its unifying headquarters merely for voting. But the importance of thus permanently and worthily establishing the primary instrument of democracy in this building is far greater in what it prepares for than in what it accomplishes.

When the voting place is located in the schoolhouse, then the district organization of the electorate, the neighborhood body politic, has a headquarters which invites use, not only for the occasional gathering of its members to decide on public questions, but for the frequent gathering of its members for such organized deliberation, such getting at the facts, such all-sided hearing and discussion, as intelligent voting presupposes. In the business of politics, the selecting of community servants, the agreement on restraints, the devising and guiding of coöperations, the together-business which we call government, the citizenship of neighborhood, city, state, nation, the committee of the whole, gets much of its deciding on details done by subcommittees just as do other and lesser organizations.

In order to have worked out, for instance, some of the details of orderly living together in a city, the citizens select certain of their number as aldermen or commissioners, and give to them, as a temporary subcommittee, the tasks of deciding upon such questions as appointments, rules, investments, and the administration of some of the coöperative enterprises the citizens have united in. Now a man's prime function as an alderman is simply to vote on public questions. It is exactly the same as a man's or a woman's prime function as a citizen, except that the alderman's responsibility in his voting is secondary and delegated, while the citizen's responsibility is primary and absolute. The relationship



with other aldermen, into which a man enters when he becomes an alderman, is the same as that which exists among citizens in any voting precinct. It is fellowship in responsibility for participation in voting.

If the members of this subcommittee met their delegated responsibility in the same manner in which the citizens meet their primary opportunity, then there would be no orderly assembling of the aldermen to talk over the questions on which they are to vote. But, on a certain day, each of them would come to the subcommittee voting place, the city hall, his idea of the matters on which he is to render decision hazy, his opinion based on such chance information or misinformation as he might have, his judgment unclarified, untested, unaugmented by any organized deliberation; and there in a booth apart register this biased, uninformed, snap judgment, and then go away, to come back to the voting place when another set of questions regarding the public welfare is to be decided.

That is not what the aldermen do. They are selected citizens. Presumably they are better qualified than other voters to decide offhand on municipal affairs. Their responsibility as a subcommittee is merely secondary. Their field of possible activity is narrowly limited in comparison with the wide range of opportunity of the committee of the whole citizenship. Nevertheless, before the aldermen begin to vote on public questions, first of all they assemble in the building in which they are to vote, and there form a deliberative assembly, organize a common council, coördinate a forum wherein there may be opportunity for the orderly presentation and free discussion of the questions upon which they are to vote.

So with the subcommittee appointed to work out

details of life together within the wider area of the state. Though the men selected as legislators are presumably even better equipped to decide without investigation and counsel, how to avoid the mistakes and develop the resources of our living together, they would not think of voting on the matters within their sphere of responsibility without first securing for themselves the opportunity for organized deliberation.

And even where the subcommittee upon the details of our orderly association is made up of men selected from the whole nation, presumably because of their rare grasp of public matters and their exceptional capacity for ready decision upon what to do and how to do it, these congressmen first get together in the building where they are to vote and establish means of orderly discussion of the questions which they are to decide in their voting.

In all these cases, and in the case of other subordinate public bodies, school board, park board, industrial commission, interstate commerce commission, indeed, in the case of every subordinate public body, the principle is recognized that if an individual is to vote intelligently, upon a public question, that is, a question which concerns not only himself, but others with himself, he must have opportunity to compare his opinion with that of men who differ from him; that is, with men who see facts that he does not see, or who see solutions which are not apparent to him, for only so can his knowledge be comprehensive enough to furnish an intelligent basis for judgment upon a *public* question.

Now, it is obvious that, if the voters who are selected as aldermen, legislators, congressmen, or members of other subordinate public bodies, presumably on account of their readiness in deciding public questions, need op-

portunity for organized deliberation that their decision may be intelligent, then the unselected citizens would need such opportunity more, even if the questions on which they are to vote were also secondary in character.

It is apparent that, if the members of these subcommittees, whose responsibility is delegated, need a chance to talk things over in an orderly manner before rendering their decision, then the members of the body whose duty it is to appoint and commission these agents and review their work, need more such machinery for ordered counsel.

And it is plain that, if the members of each of these many subcommittees need opportunity for participation in orderly discussion, that they may decide intelligently upon matters within the respective single spheres of their particular jurisdictions, then the need of the members of the committee of the whole citizenship for such organized deliberative opportunity is many times as great, for they must first and finally decide upon the problems within, not one, but all of these spheres.

✕ Of course, just as there are among the citizens in the average voting precinct, men and women of different religious affiliations, different racial, financial, cultural and taste associations, so there are, among the members of boards of aldermen, state legislatures and other subordinate public bodies; but these differences have nothing whatever to do with the bond of membership or the responsibility for sharing in the deliberations of members of these bodies, any more than they have in the sharing of their voting.

And, just as there are among the citizens of every neighborhood, some impatient idealists and some cautious conservatives, some men who hold one sort of

view on political matters, and some who hold another, so among the members of every board of aldermen, every state legislature, and every other subordinate public body, there are men who differ radically in their opinion on public or political matters. But, instead of this variety of viewpoint being a reason for division and separation, this difference of interpretation of common problems is the best possible reason for organization into single discussion bodies, which include in their membership those who differ, that the questions to be voted on may be considered from every side.

The proposal, which goes to the heart of our whole American problem, that the citizenship, which is now coördinated for decision upon public questions, shall organize for such orderly deliberation upon public questions as intelligent decision presupposes, is merely the proposal that the membership of the supreme and fundamental public body do what every subordinate public body now does.

The procedure is perfectly simple. It is exactly the same as the procedure whereby the members of every minor body secure the benefits of organized deliberative opportunity. Just as the aldermen assemble in the building where they are to vote, and there form a parliamentary, that is, a discussion organization which includes all of the aldermen as members, and just as they draft by-laws and rules of procedure and select officers, that their deliberations may be regular, so the citizens within any precinct assemble in their voting headquarters, the schoolhouse, and there form a deliberative organization which includes all of the citizens in the district as members, and by the adoption of a constitution and the selection of officers assure orderly procedure.

Of course, in the average neighborhood, not all the

citizens will participate in the formation of this citizens' common council, just as not all citizens participate in voting, just as, indeed, not all of the aldermen or congressmen attend all of the deliberative sessions of their assemblies, but whether he attends or not, every neighboring voter is an active member. And, of course, there are no dues, any more than there are dues for the aldermen to pay for the privilege and duty of gathering in aldermanic counsel. The members of every neighborhood association of citizens paid their dues when they paid their taxes, whether directly or through the agency of a landlord.

The right of the citizens in any district to the use of their neighborhood building for orderly and free discussion of public questions, just as they now use it (or some other place provided at public expense) for decision on public questions, is not likely to be questioned when the character of this organization is understood. In most cases, where that body which is charged with conducting the form of public service which occupies these buildings during a part of the time, the school board, has opposed their use for adult meetings, the school board has been entirely right in its position and faithful to its trust of looking after the public interest, for the applications which have come to the school board were to have these *public* buildings made available for use under the auspices of *private* organizations of various sorts. The members of a school board would not have a keen perception of their duty to the community if they did not oppose the use of a community building by any other than a community body. But where the organization that is formed includes as its membership the whole citizenship of the neighborhood, that is, where the present neighborhood organization for voting consti-

tutes itself an organization for deliberation, there only a school committee which has not yet gained any conception of democracy will honestly oppose the use of the schoolhouse as headquarters for such association.

Among the many communities in Wisconsin in which, during the season of 1910-1911, application was made to school boards for the use of the public school building as a meeting place for the citizens organized into an all-inclusive neighborhood association, only two boards refused the request. The reason in one case was that one of the questions which the citizens desired to take up was the proposed adoption of the commission form of government for their city. It happened that a member of the board of education was the brother of an alderman. He did not wish to facilitate discussion of a plan which might relieve his brother of that opportunity for service. In the other case the opposition came indirectly through the school board from one of the private interests in the town whose life depended on the citizens not having wholesome assembly places. Upon learning the character of the opposition in these two cases, the 1910-1911 session of the state legislature stated in law the right of the citizens to the use of the schoolhouse in any district as headquarters for the neighborhood organization of the electorate; and it was declared that where the citizenship of any community is organized for the use of this building as a community meeting place for the open presentation and free discussion of public questions, there the committee in charge of this public property *shall* make provision for the free, gratuitous and convenient use of the building for this purpose.

It is significant of the normal attitude of school men toward this use of the schoolhouse as the neighborhood political headquarters, both for voting and for the all-

sided free discussion of public questions, that the man who introduced the bill which declared the right of the citizens to this use of their property was an old school man, that the committee to which the bill was referred in each house and whose endorsement caused its passage without opposition, was largely made up of school board members, and that the state governor whose signature made the bill a law was a former school principal.

As to the detail of equipment of any school building for this deliberative assembling of the neighboring citizens, the complete answer is, as in the use of the building for voting, in the plan of having a "community room", a combination of assembly hall and gymnasium on the ground floor, reachable directly from the street or road, and fitted with comfortable, adult size seats. But, where such a community room or neighborhood hall is not yet constructed as a part of the school plant, the kindergarten room, where there is one, is suitable for this use. If there is no room on the ground floor, which is without desks, the plan mentioned in the preceding chapter, of placing the little desks in any first-floor room on "skids", thin strips of hard wood, so that they can be moved easily, and putting chairs in their places, makes possible a satisfactory place of meeting. Obviously, as most of the meetings of the neighborhood citizens' association or civic club will be held in the evening, where the teacher's request for the installation of lighting has not already been granted, this need must be met.

But, of course, the mere opening of the building, even though the equipment be perfect and the lighting, heating and janitor service be all arranged for, is not sufficient to assure, or, indeed, to make possible in the average



community the effective use of the schoolhouse as the center of the neighborhood deliberative organization of the citizenship.

In the case of the aldermen, it is not merely the opening of the city hall for their use which is provided. There is also furnished, as a matter of course, and at public expense, the service of a clerk or secretary. One can scarcely imagine the aldermen, or the members of the state legislature, or national congressmen, providing their own secretarial or clerical service. They and every other subordinate public body have provided for them the service of a man or a staff of men who look after dockets, reports, and other secretarial details of their meeting.

If one would not expect that these men, who are set apart, selected as those especially interested in public business, would take care of arranging for the bothersome details of their meeting, it certainly would not be expectable that the neighborhood body of the citizens, each of whom has his private business to attend to, and none of whom is selected as a man particularly interested in public matters, should provide their own secretarial service. To be sure, it is a fact that, so remarkable is our developing sense of community spirit and neighborhood interest, that there are many places where the schoolhouses are now used as citizenship assembly chambers, where the secretarial service of preparing programs, securing speakers whom the organization wants to hear, and looking after the preliminary and reporting publicity, is done by volunteers, or by the school principal without extra remuneration. But this is distinctly public service, and should be rendered in every community by a public servant equipped and paid as a neighborhood civic secretary.



This is not entirely a new profession, but is rather the extension of the neighborhood secretarial service, which is now rendered at public expense. In the work of the neighborhood or precinct election clerk, secretarial service for the neighborhood organization of the electorate is now publicly furnished for the voting of the citizens. When to the neighborhood civic function of gathering to vote is added the neighborhood civic function of assembling to deliberate, then the service of the neighborhood clerk is simply changed from being temporary and occasional to being continuous. It is exactly as though the aldermen had been gathering only to vote on the municipal business for which they are responsible, having for their voting a publicly hired clerk, and it now being decided that, for their intelligent voting, they should first assemble for orderly deliberation, their secretary were now to be employed continuously for their deliberation, instead of only occasionally for their decisions.

But, in the fact that the secretarial service of the neighborhood organization of the electorate is made continuous, this position is obviously very greatly magnified in importance, and the demand is created for qualities broader, if not higher, than those required in the election clerk, the temporary neighborhood civic secretary, now employed. This amounts practically to the establishment of a new profession. Where shall the person be found to serve the neighborhood organization of the electorate as secretary, not only for the occasional voting of this body, but for the frequent meetings of its members for the presentation and discussion of public questions?

There will be exceptions, of course; but the ideal and normal answer to this question is: not in the engagement

of a new neighborhood public servant, but in the addition of this requirement to the service rendered by the most important neighborhood servant now engaged. That is, the service of a neighborhood civic secretary should be required of the school principal, and this community servant or official should, of course, be paid proportionately more for assuming the responsibilities of this office in addition to those which he or she now carries.

The reasons for adding the work of secretary to the neighborhood organization of the electorate to the present work of the school principal, instead of engaging another person for this position, are apparent. There is no more important and pressing question in the whole educational problem than that of securing as school principal, for the sake of the children's efficient education, the highest type of man or woman who can be found. And, obviously, the importance of having highly qualified men and women for this position is of interest, not only to those who send their children to the public school, but to the whole community, whose future common welfare is bound up in the training which these children receive.

The question of securing a better type of school principal is in part a question of increasing the salary attached to this profession. Require that the school principal shall be at the service of the neighborhood organization of the electorate, as clerk of elections and as secretary of the organization's deliberative assemblies; require that the school principal shall do the detail work of securing such speakers on public topics as the organization desires to hear, of looking after the notification to members of what has occurred and what is planned in the business of the organization, and the increased

remuneration for this increased service will tend very strongly to assure the engagement in this position of a higher and more efficient type of public servant.

But, practically important as is the matter of increasing the salary and so elevating the standard of this profession, it is the least important way in which the addition of the work of neighborhood civic secretary to that of school principal will tend to improve this most important branch of the public service. The fact is that in many a public school the principalship is now occupied by a person who has capacities for large and efficient service, but who is at present loaded down with a lot of petty detail school work which should be done by an assistant. The requirement upon the time of the school principal in serving as secretary of the neighborhood organization of the electorate necessitates relieving him of much of this detail work, and would so set free, in channels of expression requiring higher capacities, energy which is now spent in doing work which should be done by subordinates.

The inclusion of civic secretarial service as a part of the work of the school principal would tend strongly to draw into this service men who are now attracted to other professions, and who have the qualities needed in this position. For instance, at the head of many a public school there is a young man who intends to occupy this position only until he can read enough law to be admitted to the bar, when he plans to go into that form of service, which offers opportunity for dealing directly with adults instead of only with children. There are several instances of such men who have recently changed their plan and decided to remain in their present positions, because they now see the possibility of rendering as civic secretaries just the sort of service to society

which the lawyer is supposed to render in helping to harmonize the discords and set the dislocations in the relations of men together. They see that the position of civic secretary means, among other things, the position of what might be called school district attorney, or neighborhood corporation counsel. Or again, there are young men now in this position who intend to go into journalism. The work of the civic secretary added to that of school principal means the opportunity for the expression of all the capacities that they have for publicity service, not in the round-about working for the public through service to a private owner or corporation, but directly. Or, as is frequently the case, the young man may intend to leave his position as school principal to go into business. When he sees the possibility of serving the citizens of the community in their capacity as stockholders and directors in the most important of all enterprises, the conduct of the commonwealth, which may include the establishment of a neighborhood coöperative creamery or laundry or store (social center organization is developing in this way in several instances) then all the capacities of the potential business manager are called for in this position.

There are now a number of successful lawyers, journalists, and business men who were once principals, and who would never have left the public service if that position had meant civic secretaryship, with all that this office implies. It is obvious that when the school principal is at the same time the secretary of the adult organization of the citizenship, he is necessarily a better school principal. When he is also a specialized brother, reaching out horizontally in direct service to the present citizens, he is a better specialized foster parent engaged in training up the future citizens.

For the present, the requirement of service as a civic secretary as a part of the work of the school principal will tend to result in having *men* employed in this profession. As we move on, however, from government by a sex, toward democracy, this will not necessarily be the case.

Obviously, in this office of civic secretary the school principal is not in authority over the citizenship, any more than the clerk of the board of aldermen is over them in authority. The citizens do not delegate their authority over themselves, but only over their children, when they engage, either directly or through their board committee, the school principal.

The use of the schoolhouse as a headquarters of civic deliberation implies the gathering there of a civic reference library. Where the subcommittees of the citizenship meet for deliberation, there is established a collection of printed informational matter upon the questions which they are to consider. For instance, the national subcommittee have the use of the Congressional library and librarian service to aid them; the state subcommittees have legislative reference libraries and the service of librarians, and in practically every city there is a municipal reference library and librarian at the service of aldermen or commissioners. These agents of the voters have access to the newspapers and other private sources of information, but it is recognized that, in order that their deliberations be based on correct information, it is necessary that there should be available for their use accurate data, conveniently arranged, upon the questions which they are to decide. So the use of the schoolhouse as a citizens' deliberative headquarters implies the establishment of a civic reference library there.

As the schoolhouse becomes a completely developed social center, it will include, of course, the installation of a neighborhood branch library of a general character, and there will be, as is now the case in at least some of the schoolhouses in Grand Rapids, St. Louis, Rochester, Minneapolis, and other places, a neighborhood librarian continuously employed. Where this is the case, the collected material upon public questions naturally becomes a part of this general library equipment, and its handling a part of the work of the regular librarian. Where the use of the schoolhouse as a neighborhood library has not yet developed to the point of engaging the full-time service of a librarian, the work of collecting and arranging data on public questions, so that it will be conveniently available for the citizens, is a part of the duty of the school principal in his office as civic secretary.

Now, the practical question is: How shall school principals gain the technical information necessary for efficient service as neighborhood civic secretaries? The problem of having properly equipped men for this service in the future lies partly in the training to be given in normal schools, colleges, and universities. But how about the present school principals?

If the people of a town located beside the falls of a river whose power had hitherto gone to waste were to decide to take advantage as a community of the opportunity at hand in order to supply for all, and so for each, the benefits in light and power of that community possession, the first thing that they would do would be to engage an engineer, a man technically informed upon the method of constructing the necessary machinery to develop that resource. Social center development is the construction of the necessary machinery whereby hith-

erto wasted civic and social forces may be coördinated to develop for all, and so for each, benefits in light and power. The first thing that is necessary in any city or rural county, is the engagement of a man who may be called a social engineer, who is technically qualified to advise as to the methods found successful in community organization elsewhere, and to coöperate efficiently with school principals in the service of the various neighborhoods.

At the head of every system of schools, and every rural county system of schools, there is a superintendent. The reason why this already engaged public servant should not, as a rule, be expected or required to assume direct responsibility for the orderly and systematic development of the wider use of public school plants as social centers is not because he is either unwilling or incompetent for this service. It is simply because, in the case of the city superintendent, at any rate, his hands are already full. To be sure, in a number of cities, as well as rural counties, the superintendents have personally given time and energy to the beginning of social center development. But, it is out of the question to expect this of the superintendent in the average city. The social center is not only a structure. It is alive. Once organized, it grows rapidly, and its service in any city demands the full time of a first-calibre man.

It is necessary to have for every city, and, unless there is an exceptional person employed in the position of county superintendent, in every rural county, a man engaged specifically to assume responsibility for the wider use of the school property, from the beginning. In most cities, this public servant is engaged as an associate or assistant to the superintendent of schools. In some places, Grand Rapids, for instance, he is engaged



jointly by the school board and the park commission. The reason for this is that he is charged with the responsibility of serving the citizens in their full use of the school buildings in the evenings, and also in their organized use of the parks and other out-of-door public property during the day time. In several cities, the person responsible for service as general civic secretary is engaged under the title of superintendent of recreation, and has behind him a recreation commission. But, the majority of cities in which beginnings have been made in this field, have placed the work of organizing the department in the hands of a man engaged as associate to the superintendent of schools, and this is perhaps the normal method.

The first service of this man is as general civic secretary, and in the development of the full use of the schoolhouses in the logical way by first locating the voting places in these buildings and then aiding in the establishment of their use as neighborhood headquarters of orderly deliberation, it may be expected that the general civic secretary will personally devote his time to the preliminary work of presenting the idea and helping in the organization in the various neighborhoods.

As soon as comprehensive deliberative assemblies have been formed in all of the districts in a city or rural county, it will be found desirable to federate these district organizations for the coöperation and unified action which such federation will make possible. When this is done, then the general civic secretary becomes the secretary of this league of civic clubs or federation of neighborhood associations.

Now such a city or county-wide federation of bodies each of which includes in its membership all the citizens of a district, coördinates, obviously, the whole citizen-



ship of the town or rural county. Normally, the mayor of a city should be ex-officio the presiding officer of this deliberative organization of the whole citizenship. The mayor is now the head of the citizenship, organized as it is simply for voting. When the citizenship is organized, not only for voting, but also for deliberation, its members are the same citizens, and their city officials should be ex-officio the officials of their now vitalized association.

J. W. Howes of Prescott, Wisconsin, was perhaps the first mayor of a city to realize the full possibilities of identifying the mayorship with the active presidency of an all-inclusive deliberative organization of the citizens.

In his work as secretary of the league of civic clubs, the general civic secretary not only serves on the occasion of league meetings, when either the delegates from the various clubs assemble to talk over matters of common interest or when these neighborhood organizations come together in general central auditorium gatherings, but he is also in a position to be constantly at the service of the various neighborhood civic secretaries in suggesting topics and methods.

It is important that the man who serves as neighborhood civic secretary be competent, just as it is important that the janitor who looks after the arrangements for the physical comfort of the assembling citizens be competent for his work; and in order that the beginning be wisely made, it is most desirable that the general civic secretary employed be a man of organizing capacity and social understanding; but, just as a board of aldermen, or a state legislature may be depended upon to see that its secretarial service is efficient, so after the deliberative organization of the citizenship has become active, it may be depended upon to see that its secretary

in district or city is qualified for the work for which he is employed.

The comprehensive neighborhood organization of the citizenship for deliberation in Rochester, came to be called the civic club. Soon after the beginning in that city, Rev. A. W. Gross said: "I come from New England where the town meeting develops the truest democracy the world has ever known. I am interested in the civic clubs because I think their tendency is toward the real home rule of the town meeting. The civic club is designed to make us realize the thing that we are most in danger of forgetting, that we are the government."

This identity of the spirit of this organization with that of this characteristic American expression of the early days was later noted in the characterization of it by Senator Robert M. LaFollette: "A movement which promises benefits not unlike those of the pure democracy of the old New England town meeting."

There are essential differences in method and details between the social center and the town meeting. The latter was fitted only for the use of large villages, whereas the use of the schoolhouse offers opportunity for democratic expression in the largest cities and the open country as well as the small town. Moreover, the town meeting practice contemplated regular appointed gathering only once or twice a year, which is altogether too infrequent for effective understanding and control since the problems of the public welfare have become as complex as they now are; whereas the social center idea contemplates weekly assembling of citizens. Moreover, the town meeting was an institution for deliberation alone, while the social center plan of fully using the schoolhouse means the development there of a center of

recreation, artistic, dramatic and musical expression, a local health office, employment bureau, and so on, as well as a center of democratic expression. But while these differences mark the practical adaptation of the institution to the present need, the fundamental spirit of the social center is exactly that of the town meeting.

It was with this fact in mind that Dr. Charles Fleischer of Boston said when visiting Rochester: "After visiting them, I say deliberately: That person or institution that is against social centers is against America."

And it was this fact which William Allen White expressed in his interpretation of the movement at the First National Conference on Social Center Development:

A century and a half ago there was a stir on the Atlantic seaboard of this continent. Discontent and unrest were abroad. Men and women were talking too much to suit those who worshipped the God of things as they are. The agitator, and doubtless the demagogue, too, were unsettling business and disturbing conditions with a number of unpleasant theories, political, social and economic. The mob was roused, or what was called the mob. The rabble appeared, or what was called the rabble. Men began to meet and pass resolutions. New leaders rose, those ordinary two-legged men of no social or financial consequence, with good lungs and a gift of gab. And lo, they were orators. For that is all that an orator is, the man who voices the common thought of the common people. They put into reality the aspiration of their neighbors, and behold these common men were statesmen. They fought and died for the common good and they were the national heroes.

The town hall. What a rude temple it was, yet it was God's, in working one of his mysteries. The town hall held the ark of a great covenant. Meeting and milling, these men worked out their social and political salvation. It was the town hall and the spirit of freedom bred in the

town hall that gave us liberty, not Yorktown nor any battle. It was their political institutions, the spirit of the people, that won the battles, the battles did not win the independence. The battles for independence were mere eddies in the sweeping current of moving events. For independence in America was won before a shot was fired. Independence was in the hearts of the American people and cannons could not shoot it out, any more than cannons could shoot it in. It is the babble of fools to say that God is on the side with the best guns. Guns may kill men and guns may win battles, but in the end guns are spiked by ideas and God is on the side of the righteous cause. It was the town hall that defeated Cornwallis, and it will be the gathering of neighbors in the spirit of the town meeting that will defeat those who are standing in the way of democracy to-day. The men from the town hall were mightier than King George's army and wiser than his councilors. They builded better than they knew, for they laid the foundation stones of their edifice of freedom in the common righteous vision of the common man. It is a mistake to think that these revolutionary heroes of ours were extraordinary men. They were just the sort of folks we find here to-day, and they are living in the prairies and hills and vales of America now.

To-day we are turning a corner of the most wonderful way the world ever has passed. In material progress humanity has never come so far in one hundred years, nor in spiritual development, as the world has come in this nineteenth century. Events have literally whirled past the procession of the years. Steam and electricity, those twin genii of progress, have transformed the world, have made over men's minds, have witched the world into something rich and strange. During the century past a new social and political continent has risen. The middle classes have taken the world's scepter from the kings. Theirs is the divine right of kings. And these merchant princes, these captains of industry, these high cast Brahmins of low cast politics are bringing into old habits of thought the same arrogance

of class, the same domineering insolence in their use of power, the same social, political and economic Bourbonism that was the downfall of the kings. The town hall shattered caste based upon birth. The town hall gave men whatever of liberty might come from equality of political and social opportunity.

And now we are turning the corner into an avenue of human progress where we are to struggle for more liberty, for such liberty as will come to men who have equality of economic and intellectual opportunity. Observe how the familiar roadside features that adorned the lane of progress that was new a century and a half ago are turning up in this new avenue we are just entering. Amid prosperity we have discontent; the agitator and perhaps the demagogue, too, are appearing. The people are talking too much to suit those who worship the God of things as they are. Men are following leaders who have no standing with the powers that be. The people are turning deaf ears to old arguments that once moved them. Men are meeting and milling and plotting mutiny against the established order.

But the town hall is gone. Men meet in the newspaper, but it is crowded with business. They meet on the telephone, but that costs money. They meet by telegraph, but their meetings are brief. They meet on trains, in the air and upon the street, but always they are in a hurry. There is need of a town hall. Democracy has a heart. Aspiration is deep and vital in our souls. But democracy needs a head. It must have wisdom. *And what the town hall was to New England the schoolhouse must be to-day.* We are in confusion. Our discontent is not organized. Our visions are not strongly and surely defined. This confusion and uncertainty are typical of all great movements in history. For prophets feel, they do not see. It is the people who see. It is they who construct. The wisdom of the common mind is the strength of every political abiding place. And in this new temple we are building there must be an ark of the covenant. There must be some place to which we may

turn as a nation for meditation and communion, some common ground where we may stand and, finding our common mind, speak it in the common voice. For there is a wisdom deeper than that written in any books. The common mind has the wisdom of all books. The common mind is kinder than any heart, however tender, for therein is the charity of all hearts. The common mind holds a courage firmer than any man's courage, for therein is the courage of comrades, the deepest courage men know. And when this common mind of our people has found itself, has clarified its vision, has come into its sure voice, then it will build its vision into life.

## CHAPTER III

### THE VOTERS' LEAGUE

The use of the schoolhouse in every neighborhood as the headquarters of the all-inclusive district organization of the electorate, for such orderly deliberation as voting, if it is to be intelligent, furnishes the convenient and practical means whereby the whole together-business of politics may be simplified and rationalized.

For the neighborhood, town, county, state, nation,—this means making conscious, alive, effective, the single Voters' League, which is now united in the common membership of responsibility focused in the ballot-box in each district.

When the chosen agents of the citizenship have demonstrated by their administration of the business put into their hands, that snap-judgment, touch-and-go, vote-'em-straight selections are likely to be poor, or that only the exceptional employee can prove faithful when the company that employs him goes out of existence as a company immediately after his appointment, or that only a miraculously endowed seer can tell what the people want when they never get together so that their agents can talk things over with them, then in the average community a group of volunteers forms what they call the voters' league.

These men use up some energy in forming an organi-



zation and persuading people to join and some more in raising funds to secure a headquarters and a secretary who will give his time to the work. If they have any left, it is devoted to the attempt to make the public's servants do something that they are neglecting or stop something that they are doing.

In their efforts to make the people's servants conform to their standard, they are under the bad handicap of being regarded as interferers, which they are. They are not the people. They are not the duly authorized representatives of the people. To the public officials, they are likely to appear as an organization of rivals, who would dislodge the present incumbents of office in order to get themselves or their friends into office.

In its efforts to reform the administration, such a volunteer private group, calling itself the voters' league may assume the extremely disagreeable function of prosecutor and hound some of the officials into jail. But the final object of the league's work is to get the facts to the people who have the votes. In this attempt, the league is handicapped by the fact that there is no convenient means available for reaching the people.

The league may, and in a number of communities such an organization does, publish bulletins or leaflets for distribution, which are usually read only by the members of the league.

In its "campaign of education" of the voters the great fact which every such organization seeks to emphasize is that the selection of public servants by empty party emblems or designations is absurd, that the public official is a hired man to be chosen on his fitness for the work he is to do, and that the party method of division as a means to this selection is unintelligent.

Frequently there are in the same town two or more



volunteer organizations having reform in administration of the public business as their aim. One may call itself a voters' league, one a taxpayers' association, one a citizens' association. There is nothing to prevent there being a dozen such bodies formed, competing, each with its particular complaint and proposal. Sometimes there are two or more of these private organizations which divide the various officials among them, each taking a group. For instance, in one city, there is a band of men who call themselves the municipal voters' league. These men have charge of the city officers. There is also a legislative voters' league to look after state officers. There is no reason why the other officers should be slighted. It would be perfectly logical to have also a county voters' league, a gubernatorial voters' league, a congressional voters' league and a presidential voters' league. If this were done and each organization had a separate headquarters with separate branch meeting places and separate dues to pay, and if it were a man's duty to join private organizations to fulfill his service as a citizen, then a man would have to be a member of all of these organizations, for he has equal responsibility in all these fields, and no one man who is not triplets equipped with motor cycles and money could be a completely good citizen. He would not have time.

These private organizations which call themselves voters' leagues are, as a rule, made up of splendid men, men of ideals, unselfish men surcharged with the zeal of promoting the common good. To be sure, they are almost invariably men of a certain puritan type, stern, uncompromising, rather lacking in a sense of humor, not widely representative of the whole community.

Sometimes they are men who look no deeper than the symptoms and never seek to get down to the root

of the disease, the cause of the maladministration of public business. A. Leo Weil, president of the Pittsburgh voters' league and one of the most devoted of these volunteer mentors of the public service, is not one of the superficial sort. He goes to the root of the trouble. In summing up his long experience in trailing the citizens of that city who happened to be chosen by their neighbors as members of subcommittees on municipal business, he says: "The indictment of grafters is the indictment of the community." Then he points to the trouble in the lack of united and continued participation of the whole citizenship in the common enterprise: "With the increase of official business there has come to the individual a decrease in the opportunity to participate, either by the expression of his will or of his opinion, notwithstanding the greater necessity for such expression." That this same fault lies at the basis of maladministration in the wider reaches of state and national affairs is pointed out by Dr. Frederick A. Cleveland of the Federal Commission on Economy and Efficiency. He takes account of the official incompetence which is expectable when the selections are made as they now are; then he says: "The government has suffered more from citizen neglect than it has from official incompetence."

It may be that the student of public administration in America has not gone far enough in his investigation to arrive at the point of view of Lincoln Steffens which causes him to say: "I have successively pinned my faith to three hopes of salvation for the city. First, hope in salvation through one good man, a man exerting such an influence for righteousness as would galvanize the whole municipality into righteous life. But I saw that good men die and that their ideals do not live after them. Then I thought that salvation would come

through all the good people banding together and fighting shoulder to shoulder. But I found that it wouldn't work. The hypocrisy that permeates the ranks of those whom it is conventional to call the good people always works disaster to such movements. Lastly I have come to hope in all the people getting together. I am convinced that it is the only way. The so-called good people and the so-called bad people must get upon common ground for the common good. Deacons and saloon keepers, ministers and brewers must get together, get acquainted and talk things over."

Whether the man who decently rebels against public inefficiency or betrayal has thought farther than the something-must-be-done stage or not, several very simple facts should be apparent.

When the whole citizenship of a town or city which is now organized into neighborhood associations for voting, organizes also for deliberation, then and then only is the league of the voters formed. A few voters may get together and form *a* voters' league, but *the* voters' league must include the voters, not a few, but all of them.

When this all-inclusive organization is established, with the schoolhouses as meeting places for talking over public business, then the cost of hiring headquarters is eliminated, for this league already owns city and district headquarters.

Where the citizens are reasonably equipped for deliberation, with the service of a general secretary of the city-wide federation of neighborhood bodies, and the service of a civic secretary in each district, there is no question of hiring secretaries, for they are on the job.

There is no labor of securing members, for each

voter in each district is a member of his community organization and so a member of the city association.

There is no danger of conflict between various organizations, for this body is at once a voters' league, a tax payers' association and a citizens' association, and its membership is equally interested in and equally responsible for efficiency in local, state and national business.

The cost of publicity in reaching the citizens is taken care of, for they are gathering at easily accessible and convenient meeting places, and each of these has its civic reference library with its charts and bulletins where facts may be displayed.

When this voters' league speaks to the public officials either in encouragement or reproof or in request for explanations, it is not the voice of an interferer, but of the employer.

When the citizen participates in the activities of this league, he is not laying himself open to the charge of being a presumptuous busybody, but is simply having his equal share in the common enterprise.

And finally, when election time comes round, this voters' league is not contradicting, but is putting into practice the teachings of all private and volunteer voters' leagues, that the selection of public servants should be made through discussion of the merits of men without preliminary party division.

The use of the term voters' league in describing the organization of the citizenship for deliberation, with the schoolhouses as meeting centers, suggests that such an organization would have a slant or bias toward political "reform." Obviously, when one considers that this body includes all the citizens, the defendants of things as they are as well as the proposers of change, and that they belong on an equal footing, and have equal

opportunity to present their views, it will be seen that this organization is free from any sectional slant or bias.

As to the first of the two prime aims which so-called voters' leagues or volunteer political reform organizations have, the influencing of public officials now in office so that they will render honest, efficient and faithful service :

Without considering here the improvement of the type of men selected for official positions which the comprehensive organization of the citizenship will tend to assure, and taking the men who are now in office of every kind, local, state, national, it may safely be said that dishonest officials would come to act honestly, weak officials would be strengthened, and every official would better and more faithfully represent the people whom he is supposed to serve, if the citizenship were so organized, so mobilized as to give to the weak or potentially dishonest public official the beneficent watchfulness of an alert, focused public observation, and to every official a chance to talk over with citizens together the public business in which they have engaged him.

The difference between the method and spirit in dealing with public officials, of the voters' league which is composed of the whole citizenship and that of the private volunteer group of reformers, who call themselves a voters' league, is fundamental and absolute. The private group gets into action only after evil conditions have developed. The public body is at hand from the start. The private organization by its very being assumes the crookedness of the officials. The public organization makes no such assumption. The private body comes to *make* the officials be good. The perfectly natural reaction from such treatment is to rouse all the

potential cussedness of the officials, whether in the spirit of humor, or as the natural inclination to give men who come with such an object something to do. Treat a man like a crook and if he is not one, he will probably adjust himself to accommodate, by becoming one. The common, comprehensive organization of the whole electorate does not seek to *make* the officials be good; it furnishes conditions under which a man in office may reasonably be expected to be faithful to the public interest.

Judge Ben B. Lindsey, who has had as long and as heroic experience as any man in the world in trying to *make* public officials be honest, efficient and faithful through the militant methods of private reform organization, states in a sentence the difference between the effectiveness of that method and the result of all-inclusive civic organization. He says: "We have been fighting the beast. You are making the dirty animal impossible."

Of all the heartening results that have come from the uniting of citizens on the common ground of the common interest, as members together of neighborhood deliberative bodies of the electorate, none has been more invariably demonstrated than the appreciative welcome of this organization by public officials, and the value to the citizenship through the tendency of this organization to bring out the best that there is in these chosen public servants. The attitude of the public officials toward this establishment of citizenship counsels may be shown, and the effect upon public officials of this realization of a conscious, all-inclusive voters' league, may be suggested by quoting the words of public servants of various ranks, in communities where such organization has begun to be established.

At the second meeting of the first neighborhood body of the electorate using the schoolhouse as headquarters for deliberation in Rochester, New York, the speaker was Alderman Frank Ward. The question which this neighborhood voters' league or civic club, as it called itself, had decided to take up was the advantage of the commission plan of city government. The spirit of the organization was shown in the method followed. In order to get at the facts, it was decided to call first upon a man who could tell the advantages of the existing ward representation. The alderman was invited to speak on the duties of an alderman. After he had spoken for forty-five minutes there was an hour's orderly, but free and frank discussion of the question from the floor. At its close he was given time to sum up and answer questions. The assembly then voted him thanks. The response of the alderman was in these words: "You have given me a vote of thanks. I want to give you a vote of thanks, and mine is also unanimous. If every member of the common council and every other public servant had frequently such opportunities as this to come before the people whom he is supposed to represent, and discuss with them the things in which he is supposed to represent them it would mean that we would have a better representation of the people's interest and a more intelligent government."

Any one familiar with the situation in Rochester knows that Alderman Ward, who has been for several years the chairman of the finance committee of the council, is not of the "reformer" type, but an extremely conservative Republican. He is one of the men who are supposed to owe allegiance to a "boss" of Monroe County, and this proof that the "machine" official would be delighted to transfer his allegiance to the citizen-



ship when the citizenship was organized so that there was something tangible to transfer allegiance to, throws light upon the reason why there developed intense hatred of this organization on the part of the man who had volunteered to assume charge of the public officers and their actions in Rochester. "If you want to find out who's boss around here, start something." The citizens started something when they began the organization of a real voters' league. The contest as to who is really boss of Rochester is still going on. It is recounted in some detail in another chapter because of its illustrations of what may be expected in any community where the control of public affairs has been held by some private individual or group, when the citizens who pay the bills organize to look after their property. But, here it is merely pointed out, that the official who had bowed to the yoke of the "king" welcomed with earnestness and the joy of emancipation, the support of the citizens' rule.

Where there is a "boss" of one party, there is likely to be a "boss" of the other, until the "machine" becomes bipartisan. So it may be well to quote the words of a Democratic alderman of that city. Alderman William Buckley, after learning of the benefit derived from the voters' league in other neighborhoods, aided in the preliminary assembling of the citizens of his own district, and at the organization meeting, said: "The acquaintance benefits, and the possibilities of community improvement, for the sake of the private individual, which will come through this organization, have already been spoken of. I want to speak for the official. A public official is supposed to represent the people. A good official wants to represent the people; but, how in the world can he represent the people, unless he knows what



the people want, and how is he going to know what the people want unless they get together and give him a chance to talk things over with them?"

At the Cincinnati Conference of the National Municipal League, the experience of Rochester in the use of the school buildings as neighborhood civic club houses was described. One of the men who attended that conference was Joseph C. Schubert, mayor of Madison, Wisconsin. He said that this plan of establishing a single actual voters' league which should include the whole citizenship, organized by neighborhoods, seemed to him, as soon as he heard of it, the logical, simple means whereby a mayor might be prevented from making mistakes and might serve in the steady, sure progress of the community.

Two years later, after the beginning made in Madison had shown the universal feasibility of the plan, Mayor Schubert said at the closing dinner of the First National Conference on Social Center Development:

Democratic government is government that is controlled by the people, and all the real rights of the people are certain if the administration obeys their wish. The one thing for the administration to determine is what is their wish, and the mayor is sometimes confused. When one stops to think of the different kinds of people and the different habits and tastes and the different wishes, without a simplifying focus of public opinion and desire, it is plain that there must be confusion.

The city official often resorts to the newspapers. What he says and what they think of what he says sometimes appear in the same article, so that the impression given out does injustice, not only to the official, but, what is more important, it does injustice to the cause for which the official is working. It was this sort of experience, which, I suppose, every official has, that led me to see in the idea of the com-

prehensive organization of the citizenship something of vital importance to the official as well as to the people themselves.

If a public servant sees an important improvement that should be made, the first thing that he wants to do is to talk it over with the people. Now, you can talk to an audience, perhaps one composed of a fraternal society, a religious denomination or a partisan group, but without the opportunity which the use of the schoolhouse as a social center offers you cannot talk to people of different affiliations, gathered together, and this is the sort of audience that the official wants and needs to talk to.

Men in different lines of business gather in conventions. But we are only now beginning to have the convention of citizens to discuss the business of citizenship, which is more important than any of the special lines for which men gather. And this convening of the citizens to get acquainted and to exchange ideas furnishes an indispensable opportunity, support and inspiration to the people's servants.

Mayor Schubert is a Democrat. At the same table with him sat Emil Seidel, the Socialist mayor of Milwaukee, and J. W. Howes, the Republican mayor of Prescott. The fact that partisan divisions and labels mean nothing in this voters' league, wherein men gather as citizens to consider facts and ideas, and have no interest in faction emblems, was illustrated by the presence of these men side by side at this gathering in a schoolhouse (the closing banquet of this convention was held in the Madison highschool building), and the fact that the organization of the citizenship is of equal benefit to the mayor, whatever partisan appellation he may wear, is illustrated in the similarity of the expression of these other men with that of Mayor Schubert.

Mayor Seidel's appreciation of the significance of fundamental citizenship-organization expressed itself in these words:

We have been saying that the government of the city is in the hands of the citizens, and yet up to this time the only actual government which the citizens have expressed has been through their voting once or twice a year. This should not be the case in a real democracy. There should be an opportunity for the citizens to get together frequently to discuss the problems of the city. This is necessary in order that we may keep up with changed conditions and in order to develop civic intelligence. It is necessary also in order to develop that broad acquaintance between men of different parties, creeds and classes which will lead to a better common understanding, and a more friendly feeling throughout the city.

As a public servant I welcome the opportunity that this sort of gathering gives for a free and open discussion of the topics of common interest. Such discussion helps the servants of the people to learn what they desire, and furnishes a chance for them to talk over the matters in which they seek to represent the people.

Mayor Seidel was then presiding over the largest city in the state. Mr. Howés is mayor of one of the smaller towns. He presented the change that had come over Prescott through the organization of the whole citizenship into one people's club.

There is nothing that so disgusts me as to see hitched to a load a team of horses which, when they start, fail to start together. One pulls ahead. The other sits back. Then the other starts ahead and the first sits back. I have seen six horses hitched to a load that all did the same thing, that is, they all did different things. And the worst of it was that they were all good horses getting discouraged. They represent the condition in the average town, the condition as it used to be in Prescott. A lot of little private groups, all made up of good people with good intentions, pulling backward and forward with no team work, using

up a lot of energy getting discouraged. The finest sight in the world is to see six team-trained horses hitched to a load. See them square themselves, get ready, and quietly step into position. They settle down, settle down, settle down, and then altogether they get into the harness, and the load comes. It's great to be mayor in a town where through one organization the people have learned to pull together.

Quite obviously it is not possible for the more distant state and national officials to serve as officers of the local gatherings of citizens, the voters' league, or to visit and participate in such counsels frequently, but the privilege is the more appreciated and needed when it is possible. Justice of the Supreme Court Charles E. Hughes, when governor of New York State, said at such a citizens' gathering in a schoolhouse in Rochester: "We, at Albany, at times get a false perspective. It is in meetings like these that we have the opportunity to get a true one."

Summing up the need of the public servant of every rank for this organization of the real voters' league, Senator Atlee Pomerene of Ohio said:

This country will never be as good as it can be, or as good as it ought to be, until every man and woman shall take an active interest and an active part in the public matters of this country. Do the aldermen of our cities need the citizens' common counsels? Yes. Do the mayors? Yes. Do the governors of our great commonwealths? Yes. Do the representatives in Congress and the United States senators need the citizens' common counsels? Yes, more than all the rest.

In these quotations is indicated the difference of the welcome given by public officials to the organization and activities of the voters' league which is established

through the all-inclusive coördination of the citizenship for deliberation, from the irritated antagonism which is aroused by the formation and "interference" of the usual volunteer band of reformers which goes under the name of "the voters' league."

The reason for this is deeper than the mere convenience of opportunity which the citizenship-organization offers to the public official, to talk public business over with the people who pay the bills. The reason lies in the fact that this sort of organization humanizes the public attitude toward the man who happens to be in the public service.

A corollary of the conception of the government as something *above* the citizenship has been of course the idea that the men who have been selected as agents or subcommittee members to administer the details of the together-business of government were *above* the citizens. If the city hall is up there somewhere, and the state house up higher, and the national capitol up higher yet, at the top of a pyramid, whose base is the citizenship, then of course, the men who meet at the city hall are raised, and the men who go to the state house are elevated, and the men at the national capitol are exalted, far above the men and women who live down on the earth.

This, of course, is the remnant of the old habit of thought which men learned when the authority of government was supposed to come down through an up-turned funnel over the palace of the king, running down through pipe lines to the castles of the barons, and from them distributed down to the mayors of the towns, and so sprayed upon the people from above.

This idea of the official as over the people, this divine right of kings idea, while it called for reverence on

the part of the people below tended to bring forth something else. The fact that the ruler was to be obeyed without question, tended to suggest that if the decrees of the ruler were not to be questioned, the reason might be that the wisdom and rightness of those decrees would not stand questioning. That is to say, if the official refused to explain the reason for his actions, the reason might be that he could not. Hence the assumption that "the king can do no wrong" led quite inevitably to the suspicion that the king can do no right. This suspicion on the part of subjects, or those who regarded themselves as subjects, was hastened, of course, by the abuse of power of "those in authority," but, even if the "divine right of kings" to rule were not abused, it would be natural for this suspicion to develop, as the people grew up from the child attitude of docile unthinking obedience to the open-eyed adulthood of conscious citizenship. It was as inevitable as the development which comes about in every family. At first the children look up to the parent with reverence for the parent's opinion. A thing is so, to the child, whether it is so or not if the father or mother says it is so. But as the children grow, if the parents continue to be arbitrary and do not begin to explain as soon as the children can understand explanation and to appeal to the reasoning power of the children as soon as that power is evident, then there surely comes a time when, instead of the parent's word being accepted as final and right, the suspicion and then the assumption that the parent is probably wrong grow with the maturing of the children.

The fact is that the official in this country in so far as he assumes, or is assumed to be over the people suffers from the suspicion of those who are assumed

to be under him, far more than he benefits by their blind reverence, if indeed he could benefit by blind reverence. Here and there one finds a political atavism expressed, as in the words of Irving Bacheller in his defense of the president;\* not because the president is right, but because he is president.

Of him please say no evil thing,  
For, sir, my president's my king.  
Archangels only, near to God  
May lay upon his soul the rod.

But for one man who has this feeling toward the public official there are a thousand who have the attitude of assuming or suspecting that the person in office is probably a crook.

The words of the man† who by the possession of money might enjoy exaltation if exaltation were enjoyable, are true of the average man in public office, who by the old idea might assume political elevation.

I do not wish to be above people; I wish to be with people.  
The tiresome, hateful climb upward on their heads and shoulders

Hurts their heads and shoulders, but it hurts my feet still more.

The thin, empty air; thinner and emptier and less satisfying  
the higher I get,

The platform of upturned faces on which I stand,  
The elbowing and scrambling around me and over me,  
I am sick to death of it.

My feet yearn for the feel of the sod.

I do not wish to be above people.

I wish to be with people.

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\* *Harper's Weekly*, May 25, 1912.

† Ernest Crosby in *Broad Cast*.



The typical volunteer militant group of reformers who organize into what they call the voters' league assumes that the public official is something less than a man, just as the persons of the type represented by Mr. Bacheller assume that he is something more.

The voters' league made up of the citizens gathering as neighbors to talk over the common problems of living together regards him as a neighbor, a fellow citizen, who has the equal right with other citizens to be considered innocent until proven guilty, who has the equal need of other human beings for companionship and good will.

Tom Tynan, the warden of the Colorado State Penitentiary is perhaps the most successful administrator of a prison, in the world. His attitude is expressed in these words. "No matter what a man has done, when he comes here, he is just a man." This is the attitude of the all-inclusive voters' league toward the public official. No matter what position or office a man may hold, when he comes to one of these citizens' common council gatherings, he is just a man.

Both reverence and suspicion are removed and the public servant is recognized for what he really is in a democracy, the agent of coöperation between the citizens. There will no doubt be occasionally a public servant who will fail to appreciate the joy of this fellowship support. Indeed the exception who proves the rule has appeared in Rochester, where a municipal judge answered an invitation from a neighborhood citizens' organization, to come and explain why he pardoned the milkmen whom Dr. Goler, the health officer, had arrested for distributing disease infected milk, by exclaiming: "Me explain? Why, I'm a judge!" Thus far the umpire has, however, proved *sui generis* in



this sort of attitude, even among public servants in communities where the "boss-ship" or appointing power has been assumed by a volunteer as in the case of Rochester.

In 1884, Governor Wilson in his doctoral thesis said: "The constitution is not honored by blind worship." The democratic intelligence expressed in these words, was endorsed at the recent inauguration of President Hibben at Princeton University, by the Chief Justice of the United States Supreme Court. If the constitution of the United States could speak it would probably say "Amen" and quote the words of Washington spoken in its youth, "The basis of our political systems is the right of the people to make and to alter their constitutions of government." At any rate the men in whose persons public agreement is embodied, as public agreement was embodied in the constitution when it was adopted, everywhere say by their welcome of the opportunity to meet with the citizens organized for deliberation, "The public servant is not honored by blind worship—or blind suspicion."

The effect upon the public servant of the activity of the volunteer organization of reformers calling itself the voters' league is, if it succeeds, like the reaction from the introduction of drugs, foreign substances, to fight disease in the individual. The effect upon the public service of the comprehensive organization of the whole citizenship to coöperate with the agents of its coöperation is like obedience to the law of health which makes the use of drugs unnecessary.

The other great object of organizing volunteer voters' leagues is to bring about changes in the machinery or method by which the people get the common business done, or in promoting the adoption of certain public

rules or the undertaking of certain public coöperative enterprises.

In this effort to bring about what its members regard as improvement, the private body which calls itself the voters' league always puts the cart before the horse. It *begins with the conclusion* that certain things should be done. It then goes out to persuade the public servants or the voters that its conclusion is correct. It puts the cart first and then tries to lead or drive the horse up behind it to push it along. The voters' league coördinated through the all-inclusive organization of the electorate begins by establishing an absolutely free and unbiased forum in which facts and proposed improvements may be presented from every point of view, and when, by means of fair hearing and free discussion, a conclusion is arrived at, that is the end of the preparation, and the conclusion is expressed at the ballot box.

Such organization gives full and convenient opportunity to the man who has a real improvement to offer, a very much better opportunity than he could possibly have without this organization. He does not have to waste his energy in trying to get an audience, in trying to make himself heard above hubbub and confusion. But it does something much more important than that, it tends to make sure that any proposal of improvement is sound, before it is tried. It gives the man who might be able to point out weak spots in a plan the chance to state his objections when it is broached. It furnishes a chance for such modifying and humanizing, such rounding and perfecting, such trying and winnowing of any proposal as can come to it only by being put to the test of the common-sense of, not a selected group, but all sorts of minds.

Occasionally there is a reformer who works over his

plan of improvement for twenty years, so that when it goes to the public it is matured, tested, perfect, and there are no patchings up to be made afterward. Dean Henry did this with his reform and it has not been improved upon. But his reform was not in public administration; it was in feeding cattle. This sort of reform is susceptible of private experimentation. Political reforms are not susceptible of private experimentation. It is doubtful whether any governmental improvement ever sprang full matured and perfect from the head of any one man or group of men. Very frequently the proposal of one group of reformers is half-baked, like Ephraim, "a cake not turned," a pancake, burned on one side and dough on the other. The result of the preliminary all-sided discussion of a proposal is that there emerges from such discussion a plan which may be different from, and better than the original, a genuine, sound improvement upon which both the reformers and the opponents of their project can agree.

By way of illustration, take the proposal of political change which is perhaps the most common platform of reformers in all parts of the country—the proposal to abolish the institution which has hitherto served, more than any other, as the headquarters of citizenship, the source of power in city, state and nation—the saloon.

Among the members of one of the neighborhood civic clubs, as the all-inclusive district organizations of the electorate are called in Rochester, New York, there were several ardent advocates of prohibition. One of these men proposed that arguments for the adoption of this "improvement" should be presented by Mr. Clinton Howard, an experienced advocate of prohibition, and moved that he be invited to speak before the club. The motion was amended by the attachment of the resolution

to invite Mr. Joseph Reuter, a manufacturer of that city, to speak in defense of the saloon at the same meeting, the topic to be "The Social Value of the Saloon." The motion as amended carried. Both men accepted the club's invitation.

At the meeting, Mr. Howard pointed out the evils of the saloon. Mr. Reuter granted the evils, but said that the saloon serves an essential function as a democratic gathering place, where men of average means may find the fellowship of level association and the necessary education of untrammelled discussion. The audience was made up of a few men who were decidedly opposed to the saloon, a few who were ardent defenders of the saloon, and a large majority who had no strong feelings either way, who had not given the subject much thought. In the discussion which followed the addresses, there was, of course, some of the mere thrust and parry of debate, but soon there began to evolve, in accordance with the natural tendency of discussion in which men participate who have not taken sides on a mooted question, and who therefore come to the discussion with minds free from sentiment or prejudice, the idea that neither of the contestants had the complete answer.

The idea began to take form as a consensus of opinion, that the solution was to be found neither in attacking nor in maintaining the saloon, but in the development of an institution which should provide opportunity for the man-to-man liberty of comradely association, and the education of free discussion which the saloon now offers (at least, while a man has money), but which would be free from the degrading elements of that institution. In other words, the conclusion of the argument was that the solution lay in developing

the use of the social center as a place not only of discussion, but also of fellowship with such interesting and attractive recreational equipment as would supply wholesomely the needs which the saloon destructively provides. At the end of the meeting not only had the resource of interest and acquaintance potential in the discussion of every political question been developed, but practically the whole number of men who attended the meeting, including the two main speakers, found as the outcome of the discussion a constructive program upon which they could agree.

But even where through its successful operation in other places there may be good reason to believe that a proposed reform is sound, so that the likelihood of its being changed and improved by all-sided discussion is small, the method of seeking the change through its consideration on its merits by a general league of citizens, has every advantage over the usual method of propagation, *i. e.*, the organization of a private body of those who advocate the reform.

Take the project of securing the change in any city from the old system of ward representation to the method of government by commission. Suppose that one man in a town has reason to believe that this change would be desirable for his community. If the citizens are using the schoolhouses for weekly gathering for deliberation upon public questions, he will be able at no expense, to present his argument before his own neighbors. Supposing that the discussion eventuates in the recommendation from this neighborhood organization to the general federation of neighborhood bodies, through its central committee, that this subject be taken up by all of the organizations, that is by the whole voters' league of the city. The central librarian, and

the neighborhood secretaries in their work as civic librarians at once secure and arrange accessibly the latest data upon commission government. For a few weeks the thought of the whole city is focused upon this question. It may be that the citizens vote to invite men from various cities in which the plan has been tried to come and tell the experience of those cities. This will be at public expense, of course, just as when the aldermen invite expert counsel from other cities.

By the end of the month the citizens may be ready to vote on the question. Of course, they may take longer for deliberation, if they choose, just as the members of all subcommittees may fix the time of the vote. But within a short time this question is settled and the corporation, the company, the membership of the city is free to consider other public problems.

That this sort of expeditious and economical handling of such a proposal is entirely feasible is illustrated by the fact that in the city of Appleton, Wisconsin, even though there were not at the time publicly hired neighborhood secretaries, and their work as well as that of the general civic secretary had to be done by volunteers, the proposal to change to the commission form was taken up, threshed out and voted on at practically no expense through the consideration of this question by the league of the whole citizenship in their neighborhood counsels in the schoolhouses.

Compare this business expedition and facility with the method of propagating the commission form of city government in New York State, where there is a separate volunteer league of those who believe in this reform, using up an immense amount of time, energy and money in its competition with other reform bodies for the membership and interest of the citizens. To be

sure, the question is complicated there by the fact that the legislature refuses to permit the citizens of the various cities to decide on the method of conducting their own business. But this very fact that this project of commission plan adoption is not simple, but is tied up with other changes which must be considered, is itself the best of reasons for forming a common organization which is free to turn its attention to any public question and includes in its membership not only those who are committed to one particular reform but all the voters.

While the single voters' league which is formed when the schoolhouses are used as deliberative headquarters of the whole electorate organized by neighborhoods, includes all of the members of whatever political reform organization there may be in the city and has as its function the consideration, each in its turn, of all of the projects of the various organizations as well as other projects, it should of course be recognized that the comprehensive organization thus established is not a federation of existing organizations. It is a federation of citizens, of voters, and the old private membership lines are obliterated in the fundamental and supreme membership of the one voters' league.

Obviously, this establishment of the real voters' league to do the work which private volunteer groups have been trying to do does not mean the loss to the community of the splendid service, the unselfish leadership, the high zeal for righteousness in public business administration, which the men who have been active in private reform leagues have shown. On the contrary it means the conservation of their zeal and energy which without this basic organization has been so largely burned up in the mere maintenance of private organizations, in the competitions between them, in the fighting



of other special private interferers with the public business, and in getting discouraged.

One of the great words of all voters' leagues is efficiency in government. The organization of the citizenship into one voters' league is the beginning of efficiency in government.



## CHAPTER IV

### POLITICAL ORGANIZATION—NOT PARTITION

When Alexander Hamilton banged his fist on the table, and said: "The people! The people! Sir—is a Great Beast!" he was unfair to the beast. The people in the sense in which Lincoln used the term, as referring to the electorate, is an organized body, but it is not of as high a type as a beast, for a beast, even though vaguely, has a consciousness of its unity, its selfhood. The people, the organized body of the citizenship has a unity, a selfhood, but it is no more conscious of it than are the coördinated cells of a cabbage leaf of their unity. The people is not a great beast. The people is a great vegetable.

When the members of the electorate add to their common function of participating in the decision upon public questions, the function of consciously organizing to deliberate upon public questions, then the people become a reasoning, a self-knowing being.

The use of the schoolhouse as headquarters for the neighborhood organization of the electorate for assembled deliberation on public questions, as well as for common gathering to decide public questions, is the true *political organization*, not only in intention, but in make-up and spirit.

The term "political" is one of the synonyms for the word "public." Any volunteer group of individuals may

form an organization to influence the decisions of the citizenship or the actions of public servants. Such an organization is political in its intention, but it is necessarily private, non public; that is, non political, in its makeup. This is true whether it be a group of men organized into a "ring" to "deliver the vote," or a great volunteer association for interference with the public business such as Tammany Hall; whether it be a private band of public business reformers or deformers, in any city or state; or whether it be a national party organization.

It is very strange that the term "political" which essentially connotes the *whole* citizenship should be confused with the term "partisan" which connotes that which can never be the whole, because it always refers to a part, when we have kept the original and true sense of the term political organization or body in using this expression with the two words transposed, the body-politic. The political organization, or the political body of neighborhood, city, state, nation, is simply the body-politic straightened around, eyes to the front.

Obviously there may be any number of parts; there can be only one whole. There may be any number of private groups or organizations, which have as their aim the influencing of public action, the influencing of the citizenship in its expression, or the influencing of the servants of the citizenship in their work. These may have a political aim, but their character is essentially non-political. There can be only one political organization. This is the one body of the citizenship which is now coördinated into neighborhood associations for voting, each federated with the others into city, state and then national unity—the one body-politic, the one political organization to which every voter belongs.

This organization now exists. Its nexus is the common bond of responsibility centering in the ballot-box in each community. This common membership in responsibility is the ligament, the connecting tie of the one political body. And when the citizens assume the function of really getting together, not separately, one after another, sheep fashion, tandem formation, but as a team, it does not mean the formation of a new political organization, but simply the realization of the function of deliberation which the obligation of decision implies and requires for its intelligent administration.

We have so long used the term "political organization" as synonymous with the conspiracy of a "plunderbund," or as "partisan" organization, that it is hard to grasp the idea of the common association of men of every point of view, who get together, by neighborhoods, in the district public buildings, not to get this or that privilege established, or to get a certain candidacy or theory advanced, but to learn the facts about any public matter, to find the answer to each problem as it arises, to think out what is needed, and to select the best men to do what the majority agree should be done, as a political organization. But this is and can be for the neighborhood, and the federation of such bodies can be for the nation, the only possible political organization, both in intention and makeup.

The fact is that we, the citizenship, have left the most important business of our common political life to private groups. We have gathered in this political organization to express our wills. We have failed to concert our intelligence in the directing of our wills. We have gathered to pull the trigger. We have left it to private organizations to load and aim and sight the gun. We have gathered to put into our national system

the medicine. We have left it to any one who chooses to concoct the dose and label the bottle. We have gathered to sign checks upon our accounts, and promissory notes. We have left it to irresponsible and self-seeking individuals and groups to make out the checks and write the notes.

To be sure, at each election, we have had the choice of pulling the triggers of several guns; but they were all privately loaded and aimed. We have had the chance to select among two or three differently labeled bottles; but each was privately concocted. We have had the privilege of choosing among several sets of checks and notes; but each was written by a private group.

When we came to shoot, to swallow, to sign, we have found that each group of aimers, pharmacists, check writers, was saying that all the other guns were wrongly aimed, all the other mixtures were bad medicine, all the other checks and notes were crooked. Which was right we learned after election, and if we had been misled by one private group so that we felt it, we turned to give another private organization a chance at us next time.

We have gathered to go ahead. We have not gotten together to be sure we were right about the direction. We have gathered to act; we have not gotten together to make up our mind how to act. We have gathered to tell the answers to problems; we have not gotten together to work out the problems.

And this private preparation of the alternatives for public choice, this pulling and shoudering and self-seeking, this effort to dominate, to rule, to get votes, with all its trickery and intrigue, with all its buncombe and hypocrisy, we have called—"politics." We turn to the dictionary, Webster's for instance, and there, first, is the definition: "Politics is the science of government."

It is not necessary to say that every private organization of men, such as a party, which aims to influence the public's action is crooked and anti-social in its intent. The vast majority of men in every party are noble in their purpose, because the vast majority of men are fine in spirit. But not only is the party, in its makeup, essentially and necessarily non-political, that is non-public, but in its essential spirit the party organization is a non-political body in the sense in which Webster defined the term, as the "science of government." There is essentially nothing scientific in the character of the political party.

The nexus which holds men together in a party, at the best (and often it is less and lower) is not inquiry, the desire to get at the facts, but belief. The prohibition party, for instance, is an organization of those who believe in prohibition. The socialist party is an organization of those who believe in socialism and subscribe to a creed. The dominant parties are made up of those who believe (in a confused, lackadaisical, custom-ruled, brain-drying way, to be sure, as must necessarily be the case when the issues on which the parties divided are dead and the parties are still toting the corpses around as their proud emblems of division) in "Republicanism" and "Democracy" respectively. What these words mean, one can tell at any particular time by reading the party "platform." This is for use, as has frequently been noted, as a car platform is used, merely to get in on. But while it exists this platform is the party's creed.

There is no objection to the organization of believers to comfort each other in their faith or to propagate their belief; but for the settlement of our common problems of living together, for working out the questions of what to do and how to do it in our associated

life, for getting the together-business done that we want done, this reason deadening, sentimentality developing exercise of the believing function as the means of preparation for finding intelligent answers, is certainly as far from the scientific method and attitude as blindness is from sight. The attitude of science is always and everywhere, the see-both-sides, look-at-the-problem-from-every-point-of-view attitude.

The common organization of the citizenship, using the schoolhouses as neighborhood headquarters for deliberation upon public questions is essentially political, essentially scientific in its character and spirit. This organization has no nexus of common belief as its basis. Its nexus is the common spirit of inquiry, the common desire to get at the truth. If one or more individuals in such a body have similar political views or beliefs, there are present individuals who have other points of view, other beliefs. If the discussion eventuates in agreement, or in the majority arriving at the same idea, or belief, all right. If not, the discussion will continue until they do. A consensus of opinion, a common belief may come as the conclusion. It is never the starting point or basis of this organization.\* This body stands on no "platform." It stands upon the ground, the common ground.

A simple and, perhaps, trite illustration may make the difference between this scientific, that is, political-organization get-together method, and the party division method plain. Suppose that we are a community of one hundred and seventy citizens. The question to be decided is regarding the color of a shield, green on one side and brown on the other, which has appeared in our midst. We will decide this question by the party method.

"What color is the shield?"

"Green," whisper to each other the men who stand on the green side.

"Brown," they who see the other side are saying.

The essential idea of party organization is to "stand pat," to stay where you are, to "keep the faith," and we are going to decide this question by the party method. Those who see the shield as green therefore organize a party whose platform is the belief in the greenness of the shield. They listen to speakers from their number; good speakers they are, for they prove the greenness of the shield to people who already believe that it is green. Association develops enthusiasm. Party spirit is appealed to and responds. A sense of superiority develops. That anybody can fail to see that the shield is green proves that he must be stupid or worse. Green becomes a principle to which the members of the party pledge themselves. They contribute to green campaign expenses; they march in green torchlight processions.

Meanwhile the same thing is happening among the men who see the brown side. "What's that you say? Those people declare the shield is green? Don't go near them. They are fools or liars—enemies of the common weal. Wait till election! We'll show who's right." And the brown party organization holds brown mass meetings, and vociferously, excitedly and at great expense, persuade themselves of what they already believe.

At last the vote is taken, and the question decided. It happens that ninety-two of us were standing where the shield looked green and only eighty-four were on the brown side.

Hurray! Rooster on the front page!—to one who has seen two roosters kill each other, not because they had anything to gain by fighting, or because there was



any ground of enmity between them, but simply because it pleased a leering brute to set them at it, there is something peculiarly appropriate about that rooster on the front page. Great victory over the *enemy*! The shield is declared green.

If, instead of using the party-division method in deciding this common problem, that is, if we had gotten together so as to look at the matter from different points of view, we would all have found that the question regarding the color of the shield, being two sided, was more interesting than we had supposed. We would all have learned something. We would not have wasted, absolutely wasted, a lot of energy. Some of us would not have developed the poisonous idea that others of us were dishonest or imbecile and the decision would have been intelligent. Moreover, we would not suffer and cause our children to suffer from the dreadful hang-over of division continued after this issue had been settled.

It may be granted that the practical questions regarding rules to be adopted, investments to be made, selection of servants, coöperations to be entered into in our life together, are not so impersonal, as this of the color of the shield, that they are finally economic and come close home as questions regarding bread for our families and the environment of life or death for our children. But they are *questions*, always *questions*, as to what to do and how to do it, little immediate sections of the big continuous problem of civilized adjustment. Questions call always for learning the facts, for looking at every side, for light, for investigation, for quiet in which to get other people's points of view, and never for denunciation, in their solution.

The American attitude which says "Come let us rea-



son together," expressed in the old Yankee, "I want to know," and modernized into, "You'll have to show me," is the true political attitude. This is the normal attitude in which acquainted citizens will face the together-problems of government when the one political organization of the whole citizenship is seen for what it is, the common bond of uniting membership in responsibility which implies the common union of citizens for discussion. As citizens organize by neighborhoods, using the schoolhouses both for voting and for such deliberation together as intelligent voting presupposes, the old artificial, house-divided-against-itself antagonisms, weaknesses and conceits will seem as weird and strange as the harboring of the caste divisions which curse India.

This is the intelligent way of doing away with parties and so *adequately* "answering to the universal law of necessary organization," to quote a phrase which Senator Elihu Root used in his address before the Chicago Republican Convention. This is the simple and practical way of making forever impossible a repetition of that national disgrace of 1912 which came through our leaving to private groups our public business of calmly considering together the qualifications of candidates for our employment.

With the ballot-box in each community, binding the one organization of the electorate together as aldermen are bound together by their responsibility for voting, and with the schoolhouse inviting use as a headquarters of the citizenship as the city hall invites the use by the aldermen for their all-inclusive organization for deliberation, the means are at hand, and surely the time is ripe for emancipation from the enslaving, separating false loyalties to parties, and for realizing ourselves as one political whole. Surely the together-business of our

associated life has long enough been the sport of irresponsible private groups.

And, yet, men talk of a realignment of parties, the old division between Republican and Democrat having become entirely meaningless. Suppose new parties are formed on the issues of to-day. These particular issues which grow out of our present situation will be passed in a few years. Meanwhile, these issues cannot be intelligently decided except by conference. Suppose there be such a line-up as progressive versus conservative. Obviously, this will bring confusion in a little while, when the older men in years and spirit, who would now form the conservative party shall have died, and the younger men shall have become old and conservative.

But how about such a radical difference as that between socialists and the defendants of capitalism? Is not this an irrepressible conflict? Let us see.

Walter Rauschenbusch, than whom there is no clearer eyed student of social conditions in America, says: "No preventives against the formation of social classes *written in a paper constitution* can long save us from the iron wedge which capitalism drives through society. The existence of two distinct classes is inherent in the nature of capitalistic organization of industry, and essential to its very existence."

Grant the truth of Dr. Rauschenbusch's statement, and supplement it by that of the late Senator Hanna or that of President Taft, that the next issue is the present system versus socialism.

What about it?

The point is not whether there is a vital and real difference here, but simply—How shall this difference be adjusted? The one question is—How shall this problem be solved? There are two possible methods and

only two. One is by the use of bombs; the other is by the use of brains. One is by dynamite; the other is by debate.

It is exactly the same question that lay before the colonies in the other critical period of American history. Should they use their differences as occasion for using their heads or losing their heads. Should they build the timber of their clash of interest into a barricade or into a bridge. Should they harbor the wedge, or forge it into a link? Should they separate and hate and fear and fight over the difference or should they get together and talk over the difference? Should they use those problems as the means of flinging them apart in the weakness of mutual hostility, which might be the means of bringing them together and developing their power and intelligence?

The great problem of our century is whether we have sense enough to use this difference of ours as a means of developing our intelligence, instead of using it as the occasion of developing our animosity, and so setting us and our children back a hundred, or a thousand years. It is not a test of the strength of a paper constitution. It is a test of our common sense.

On the same page\* on which Dr. Rauschenbusch writes the statement quoted above, he says: "The very fact that we can feel our social wrongs so keenly and *discuss them calmly* and without fear of social hatred, is one of the highest tributes paid our age."

The question is simply whether we have grown up enough to deserve the tribute, whether we are men enough to use the human political method of discussion together on a common ground, or whether we are still

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\* "Christianity and the Social Crisis," p. 220.

capable only of the brutal party method of division and separating contest.

There is proof absolutely conclusive, that the answer lies in simply establishing the means, the apparatus, the machinery, the place, whereby and wherein orderly discussion may be carried on, organized debate held, arguments from various sides spoken and listened to. The way is to-day, as it was in the other critical period, simply in the establishment of a common ground of orderly presentation and discussion. Then, it was for the settlement of differences between commonwealths; to-day, it is for the settlement of differences between individuals. Then, the answer lay in union of the states to administer the common enterprise. To-day, the answer lies in the association of men, not "head-on" either in sentimental brotherhood attraction, nor in brute contest, but shoulder to shoulder to engage in the common enterprise of together facing specific public questions as they arise and of studying out the answers.

Kipling may or may not have been right when he said:

But there is neither East nor West,  
Border, nor breed, nor birth,  
When two strong men stand face to face.

But certain it is that, there is neither party conceit, nor animosity, when neighbors stand *shoulder to shoulder* to work out the problems of the community welfare, the problems of America's making good.

Take one instance from Los Angeles.

It was just after the McNamara confession. The whole city was tense and throbbing with the pain of its fresh cleavage. Denunciation, hostility, the blood-

lust that is bred of fear were in the air. One group of men were shouting on street corners or in the newspapers that their neighbors, who belonged to the "Good Government Party," were parasites, hypocrites, blood-suckers. The members of the other faction were screaming that their neighbors, who happened to belong to the Socialist Party, were aiming to make every home in Los Angeles a brothel.

In the midst of this bedlam the neighboring citizens who lived in the district about the Polytechnic High School, gathered in that building and formed a deliberative association. There were socialists among them, and anti-socialists; but there, they were neighbors gathered to get at the facts. By this body, the two leading candidates were invited to come and tell why each thought that he should be employed as mayor. Mr. Alexander, who is himself neither a fire eater nor spell-binder, sent a man to advocate his appointment who would be able to do the Bosco act and "eat 'em alive," his neighbors who happened to approve of Mr. Harriman being the snakes. Mr. Harriman came in person. In the audience were a few violent partisans of each sort, but as is always the case in such an assemblage, the majority were people who wanted to learn, and who were seeking not blood but information. Each of the candidates was a guest, and these neighboring citizens were hosts. The element of "politeness" which is from the same root as politics, and is the mark of the true political spirit, was there, of course. If either candidate talked anything but sense, if either resorted to foolish denunciation, the other was on hand to point out the weakness of his position, and the audience was there to see it. The meeting was interesting and enjoyable as well as educational.

The discussion centered on practical specific questions

of what to do and how to do it in promoting the city's welfare, such matters as the harbor proposition, the water supply proposal, the project of furnishing wholesome recreation opportunities. There was a perfectly natural absence of animosity and bitterness, because people were using their energy in trying to understand problems, and energy cannot be used for thinking and for hating at the same time. The discovery was made, the very important discovery, by everybody present, including the members of each group, that everybody, including the members of the other group, was a human being and a neighbor, and all the "thief," and "traitor" and "enemy" talk and attitude which had been induced by the darkness of separation disappeared like the wild fear and blind fighting of the night when the light breaks through.

One of the men who attended that meeting said: "This common-ground of neighborly discussion seemed like an island in the midst of an angry sea, like a lucid interval in the midst of delirium. It seemed like magic."

But there was nothing magical about it. It was exactly the same experience which the warring and hostile commonwealths had, when, in the midst of their bitter hostility, the opportunity for orderly discussion of the matters over which they had been divided was created, and the Goddess of Discord was dethroned merely by establishing a standing ground for common-sense.

The situation in Los Angeles was one in which the disease of partition had become acute. The fracture, the cleavage between the separated sections of the body of the citizenship had become inflamed. The malady had proceeded to a painful stage. Yet, just as soon as the common forum for orderly discussion was coordinated, and men and women gathered as neighboring

members of the one political organization of the citizenship, health and sanity returned.

Suppose, however, that instead of waiting until the community had reached that condition, the people had organized for neighborly deliberation, not in this one district alone, but in each district of the city of Los Angeles, and suppose that they had been gathering not as members of parties but as members of the whole common organization whose responsibility it is to solve the problems, to select the servants, to agree upon the rules and to devise the coöperations of civic association. Suppose that, with the service of a civic secretary in each neighborhood, and the coördinating service of a general secretary of the federation of neighborhood associations, the members of that good town had been assembling to develop the resources of democracy and neighborship, the resources in acquaintance and breadth of understanding; the questions as to what to do and how to do it would have come along in an orderly succession, and the selection of servants and presiding officers, each on his merits, would have furnished no occasion for public madness.

There may be a certain childish pleasure in dressing up, putting on oilcloth capes and funny hats and marching down the street behind a band with ill-smelling torches on the end of sticks, in hand. The pleasure coming to each one probably is the fact that a lot of other people are doing the same foolish thing at the same time. And there is, no doubt, a certain weird pleasure in playing at being scared by bogies, and in rough-house actions, just as there is in getting drunk and beating one's wife. But, men and women, with the problem of a community's welfare on their hands, with all that this involves, for the present and the future, should not take



time for these immature and brute indulgences before election, when they have the serious business of deciding public questions before them. Business before pleasure. If the citizens of the town or the nation must go on a debauch, they should wait until after election.

Is there reason for the separate existence of the Republican party or the Democratic party? Only if the people of this country desire to continue to suffer from the rule of the enemies of the common good in the continued demonstration of the principle that Napoleon spoke: "Divide and Dominate."

As Washington said of the "common and continued mischiefs of the spirit of party": "It serves always to distract the public councils and enfeeble the public administration. It agitates the community with ill-founded jealousies and false alarms; kindles the animosity of one part against another; foment occasionally riot and insurrection." Then, Washington pointed across the sea to the hostile force, as though the enemy of the democracy were to come from abroad, and he said of this party division: "It opens the doors to *foreign* influence and corruption, which find a facilitated access to the government itself through the channels of party passions." Washington was wrong as to the source of danger. The great corporation interests had not yet appeared. But, the rule of selfish, exploiting influence and corruption amounts to the same thing, whether it comes from outside or from within, and *this* enemy of our welfare finds "a *facilitated* access to the government itself" through exactly the same channels as would the common danger from without.

Is there reason for the formation and continued separate existence of the socialist party? Not if the members of it desire the progress of socialism. Go back to Los



Angeles. At that same election, in which the socialist party was defeated, a most important practical question was decided as the socialist would have it decided. The city voted to inaugurate the publication of a municipal newspaper. If this socialistic proposal had come from a party socialist, if it had been known and advanced as a socialist party measure, and had been wedged in with a lot of other planks in a socialist party platform, it would have been defeated. Being presented as a distinct proposition, to be decided on its merits, it was indorsed. The same truth that people do not want to vote on "isms," either capitalism or socialism, but may be counted on to act with intelligence, even with the boiler-shop racket and hubbub going on which now precedes elections, when practical specific propositions are presented, is illustrated in the election at Milwaukee, in which, while the socialist party was defeated, a most important measure which any intelligent socialist would advocate, carried, namely, the proposal that the people invest eighty-eight thousand dollars to develop the civic, social, and recreational resources inherent in the orderly wider use of existing public property. If this socialistic proposal had gone before the people as a socialist party measure, it would have been defeated with the party.

The same practical fact, that excellent propositions, when tangled up with partisan promotion, are so blurred and discolored thereby as to be killed when, if they were considered simply on their merits, they would be welcomed, is illustrated by the fate of the children's bureau in Milwaukee. Started under the socialists, it was throttled by the succeeding partisans, not because it was not a most desirable institution, but because it had been established by party socialists. It is inconceivable that, if this bureau had been established as a result of the de-

cision of the citizens of Milwaukee, arrived at through their orderly discussion of the common welfare as members of the all-inclusive association of that city, any servants that they might choose to administer their common business would presume to destroy this intelligent means of their community self-service. In the state legislature of Wisconsin, as well as in the city of Milwaukee, it has been demonstrated over and over again that good measures have failed of success, simply because they came as socialist party propositions. The writer has heard, regarding a dozen proposals: "That is certainly a good measure. No doubt about it. And I would be for it, if it were not that it has the backing of the socialist party." Indeed, in practice the socialist administration in Milwaukee recognized that party backing is harmful, in such enterprises as the institution of a "sane celebration" of the Fourth of July for the city, and in the beginning of the substitution of wholesome, well-supervised municipal dances, in place of the Saturday night dissipations which had been "run" for commercial gain in that city.

In entering upon both these public enterprises, as in others, the people who advocated them tried by all means to have them considered and taken up as measures to be judged on their merits, and without their harmful and distracting consideration as party measures. It is perfectly obvious that if Mr. Roosevelt had advocated the withdrawal of the public lands, or the national irrigation projects, or the building of the Panama Canal, as socialist party projects, each of these socialistic proposals would have been defeated. If men or women are sincere in desiring to hasten the substitution of orderly coöperation for disorderly and wasteful competition, they will not "queer" specific proposals of coöperation by

putting them forth as prejudice-awakening party measures. One of the men who is doing as much as any man in America to bring order out of the present social chaos said: "I would fight like a tiger against being labeled a party socialist, not because I do not agree with socialist principles, but because I am so tremendously impatient to get things done. The worst obstacle to the advance of practical democratic coöperation is party."

Is there reason for the formation and separate existence of a capitalist party? Not if the advocates of conservatism desire cautious, all-considering procedure, and the prevention of hasty and impulsive action. As Bagehot says: \* "If you want to stop instant and immediate action, always make it a condition that the action shall not begin till a considerable number of persons have talked it over and agreed upon it. If those people be of different temperaments, different ideas, and different educations, you have an infallible security that nothing, or almost nothing, will be done with *excessive* rapidity. Each kind of persons will have their spokesman; each spokesman will have his characteristic objection, and each his counter proposition." Mr. Bagehot then gives a list of the sorts of men who oppose the establishment of a fundamental polity of common all-sided discussion in place of party division. The intelligent conservative is not in the list. He points out the fact that the chief objection to this method of taking up matters and discussing them simply on their merits, would come from the man who desires the rule of the military dictator, who would have men not think, but obey. Then he says: "All these invectives are perpetual and many-sided; they come from philosophers, each of whom wants some new

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\* *Physics and Politics*, p. 193.

scheme tried; from philanthropists, who want some evil abated; from revolutionists, who want some old institution destroyed; from new aerists, who want their new aera started forthwith. And they all are distinct admissions that a polity of discussion is the greatest hindrance to the inherited mistake of human nature, to the desire to act promptly, which in a simple (i. e. a military) age is so excellent, but which in a later and complex time leads to so much evil." Let a proposition come before the people with the endorsement and backing of a capitalist party and it would be handicapped, "queered," prejudged, that is, it would be denied reasonable consideration in just the same way as if it came as a socialist party measure.

The perfectly simple, rational solution of the whole problem, is in the common organization of the citizenship as a whole to deliberate upon public questions, unhampered by party bias or distractions. The intelligent procedure is simply to use the one existing political organization of the whole citizenship for getting together to discuss the problems of what to do and how to do it that the welfare of all, and so of each, may be conserved and advanced. The answer lies in the coördination of the common institution, wherein proposed rules of our life together may be considered and agreed upon, wherein the qualifications of applicants for engagement in the public service may be learned, wherein the desirability of proposed coöperations may be discussed.

This means the elimination of the danger from the "men of the deed," whether violent I. W. W. or violent "Merchants and Manufacturers." It means the elimination of the whole brutal force to settle disputes which make the names Homestead, Cripple Creek, Seattle, Lawrence, and San Diego connote senseless barbarity.

In each of these cases, as in every case of human disagreement, the object has been, on the part of one set of people, to get ideas into the heads of another set of people. The normal and natural channel for the entrance of ideas is through the ears, and the eyes. When, for any reason, these usual entrances are not accessible, then, and then only do those who have ideas that they feel must be gotten into the heads of other folks, attempt to get them in through the skull. Sometimes the eyes and ears are closed. Sometimes the room inside is jam full about the entrances. It is like the occasion at Capernaum when the house was crowded. The four men who felt that they must make an entrance, that it was a case of life and death, climbed up and made an opening in the roof, and let their burden down through the hole. They would not have done it if they could have gotten in in the usual way. The organization of the citizenship to use the schoolhouses as deliberation centers is the simple method by which the use of ears and eyes may be arranged for in an orderly manner for the transmission of ideas regarding public matters, and by which tongues may be used instead of teeth to indicate what has happened to the various ideas when they have gotten inside.

This means the elimination of the threat of the "man on horseback." The leadership impulse, like the let's-change-things-and-have-'em-different impulse, the spirit of tyranny, as well as the spirit of revolution, is simply a manifestation of a perfectly normal element in human society. It is like gasoline in its potentiality for destruction or for beneficial service, depending upon the machinery in which its power is directed and controlled. If the gasoline is simply touched off "promiscuous," not only is damage done, but energy is lost. If the same

gasoline is put into a tank and conducted in an orderly manner to the carburetor, where the proper mixture with air is made, and then is moved to express itself by just the right sort of friction, and finds opportunity for its expression in ordered explosions against the pistons in the cylinder, then, gasoline nature has not changed; but, instead of smashing things and wasting its energy, it drives the automobile up the hill. Now, if Colonel Roosevelt and Mr. Debs, General Otis and Miss Goldman, Mr. Baer and Mr. Haywood, Congressman Berger and Judge Hanford all lived in the same district and belonged to the same neighborhood citizens' association and met in the same schoolhouse for deliberation upon public questions, it is possible that even though the president of the club were a worthy chairman, and even though there would be opportunity for the explosive gasoline to mix with a reasonable amount of common-folks air, it might be that the mixture would be a little "rich," but, at the worst, it would mean only sooting the spark-plug, a smoky exhaust, and harmless explosions in the muffler.

Without this coördination of a machine for orderly use of the driving forces in society, we are always in the anomalous and contradictory position of bemoaning the lack of public interest on the part of our fellow citizens, and then, when any manifestation of a large endowment of public interest is given, getting scared, and trying to turn the hose on it and put it out.

Common citizenship organization to make selections of public servants and to handle intelligently the preliminary business which has been done by irresponsible and self-appointed individuals and parties, does away at a stroke with the whole pauperizing or corrupting use of private money in pre-election campaigns. When the



schoolhouses in the districts are used as headquarters for the neighborhood branches of the single political organization for deliberation, and the city or town auditorium is used for meetings held under the auspices of the city or town association, organized as a voters' league, then the private rental of halls and the advertising expense are cut out. There is no place whatever for the corrupt-practice-inducing use of private money, except for car-fare of the various candidates who are invited by their prospective employing body to speak before it. The candidate who is embarrassed by possession of much property has not the slightest advantage over the candidate who, like Lincoln, is relieved of that impediment. At present, when volunteer party bodies, or self-seeking individuals pay these properly public expenses of hall-hire, et cetera, for the presentation of views upon public questions, they either do it because they expect to get it back with interest, or they do it as a charity. The one means public robbery, the other public pauperism.

The use of the schoolhouses as the neighborhood headquarters of the all-inclusive organization of the citizenship, the one political organization, not only for voting, but for the preliminary business of selecting and considering the qualifications of various men for service, and the desirability of various courses of procedure in adopting rules and devising coöperations, means the preservation of the political convention advantages, without the evils that rose out of its partisan and exclusive private character, and means securing the advantages of the direct primary method without the obvious evils which arise from its partisan character.

In those parts of the country where the convention system has been abandoned, many of the older men

claim that the grade of public servants or representatives is lower than in the old days of the party convention. Whether this is so or not, there is obvious reason why it should be so. The present "button-hole" method by which the individual gets himself before the people, certainly tends to select only those men for office who seek office. There is no means whereby the people of a community may become acquainted with the capacities of their fellow citizen for deciding public questions. The old party convention system is well discarded, but this virtue of convening to discuss public questions, whereby the resources in leadership of the men who do not push themselves forward may be learned, cannot be spared. The experiment with the party primary method has demonstrated that the average man is not a partisan. Usually far less than half the voters participate in party primaries. It has proved a means of confusion, even on the part of those who have participated. The results in the recent party primaries in Massachusetts and Maryland were stupidly illogical. The use of the party primary method has not reduced the amount of money used in primary campaigns, but with this method the corruption funds have been enormously increased. The party primaries have been the occasion of disgraceful vituperation and clap-trap. And everywhere the practice is common of partisans of one stripe going into the primaries of the other party and voting for the worst and weakest candidate for public office, deliberately endangering the common welfare, that their party may have a better chance of winning.

The evils of the party convention system and the evils of the party direct primary system are simply the evils of party division. The solution lies in the establishment of a permanent convention system, which, in-



cluding the whole citizenship, has as its function not only, as now, the final decision, but also the preliminary or primary deliberation and selection of men and measures.

This use of the schoolhouses as the centers of the all-inclusive conscious organization of the citizenship means the coördination of the single political machine, which is necessary if democracy is to "democ."

The antipathy to "machine" politics has been due to the fact that on account of the lack of the single machine of democracy, private groups have formed to control sources of information, or the actions of the public's servants. The hero has been the man who has "broken up the machine," usually by constructing another, similar in the fact that it also was private. But a machine is necessary. The machine was profitable to the men who controlled it. The political machine created by the organization of the citizenship for the use of the schoolhouse as the common political headquarters means the coördination not only of a machine whereby all men may work together for good, but it means the assembling of a machine by which all men may so control their servants or agents that they shall work for the together-good.

Suppose that the citizens of this and other communities are organized, not split up into rival fragments, but organized into a common association, with the membership easily mobilized and frequently gathering in the common neighborhood centers. If a man wants an office, how shall he get it? Shall he go to the machine? He must. Suppose a man in office objects to carrying out the will of his employers. He is invited to come and talk over the matter with his employers. He will not refuse; but suppose he does. The company whose serv-

ant he is decides in conference that they made a mistake in his selection. There is no bother about it.

The social center is the simple political machine, and it is as powerful as it is simple. The declaration with which we started out says that a government derives its just power "from the *consent* of the governed." The power of our government in so far as it is "just" comes from the *consent* of the citizens. Pick up a newspaper and see a cartoon representing the "citizen." How familiar he is, an absurd little, thin-necked nincompoop, with worried side-burns and increasing bald spot, wondering how he'll get his tribute paid, his tribute for being allowed to live, and fearful of what is going to be done to him next. Is he the source of power of this government? "The *consent* of the governed!" "Consent" means together-feeling. That is the source of power, and the only source of power. To-day the *only* driving force of the government comes from the ballot boxes whereto once in so often the citizens of the neighborhood go, each by himself, one at a time, alone.

A man visited an insane asylum. He came into a ward where forty insane people were sitting about the room. He found only one man in charge. Seeing the lowering expressions on the faces of some of them, he exclaimed in a startled whisper to the keeper: "Great heavens, man! I should think you would be scared to death to be in this room with all these maniacs. Suppose they should get the idea of taking you apart like a watch to see why you tick. What would you do?"

The keeper smiled. "There is not the slightest danger," he answered. "If one of them started anything, all the rest would stop what they are doing and look at him. It would never be more than one at a time. They

have no power. You see they are crazy. They can't act together."

The American citizens are not crazy. They can act together. The intelligence that we as a people have shown in uniting to build these common buildings in every neighborhood will show itself in our uniting to use them, and these assembling places for orderly deliberation as well as for decision will prove the efficient source of power adequate, for they will be the places of the "consent," the together-feeling of the governing.

## CHAPTER V

### LIKE HOME

"This is going to make the neighborhood feel like home—in spite of telephones, newspapers, trolley cars and all the modern improvements."

He was a banker who spoke, and the occasion was the opening of a school building as a citizenship headquarters, a neighborhood civic club house, in a middle western city.

"When I was a young man," he went on, "back in Licking County, Ohio, folks used to meet like this in the old drab, weatherboard schoolhouse. We called it the 'Literary'; in some places they called it the 'Lyceum,' and in some it was just 'schoolhouse meetin's.' The old double seats weren't any too comfortable; the light from the kerosene lamps, with their tin reflectors, wasn't any too good; but there was a human spirit in those gatherings, a man-to-man frankness and democracy that *made America mean something*. There was the spirit of neighborhood there—not only in the sociables, the spelldowns, and singing school, but in the meetings where folks just listened to speakers and talked. Getting together about things we had in common, whether it was what kind of a bridge we should have across the creek, or the tariff, we felt a first-hand responsibility for being citizens.

"I came away to the city. I got into the scramble. I've been at it as hard as anybody, and I've succeeded

fairly well. But all the time there has been something missing. I know a lot of fine people, but I don't know my neighbors. I obey the laws and vote at election time, but somehow I don't get that *feel* of being a citizen. The fact is, I've lived here twenty years, and it has never felt like home. But to-night, when we're getting together, not as a party nor a sect, nor as a particular social set, but just as folks, as citizens, as neighbors, in this building which embodies the greatest of our common interests, that old feeling comes back; and, as we go on with this—I tell you—even the city is going to feel *like home*."

Unlike any other significant movement of modern times, the gathering in, from every corner, of neighbors, to construct the institution of the common life, the headquarters of democracy; the movement to make of the schoolhouse the standing ground of our coöperation, appeals most strongly to the older, more conservative American. There is reason for this, because, two generations ago in the average community in the middle west and elsewhere, the schoolhouse was used, spontaneously, to be sure, without planning or forethought, but used, not only as a center for the education of children during the day, but also in the evening as the place of adult gathering, the center of neighborhood.

Why this did not continue was simply because people failed to grasp the *community* idea. The common schoolhouse began to be turned over to separate organizations, partisan, sectarian, exclusive, instead of being kept always and only for the use of the one common organization of the whole community. For a time, however, before there came these divisions which could have been prevented only by the community employment of a servant, a neighborhood secretary of the common or-

ganization of the citizenship, or the recognition of this service as one of the regular functions of the school principal, this character of the schoolhouse as a real social center lasted. And it lasted long enough to impress the memory of America.

Histories have to be rewritten continually as our viewpoint shifts from that which regards military exploits as important, to that which emphasizes constitutional changes, then that which looks for industrial development, and finally to that which gives full recognition to the social life of the past. When an American history shall be written from this intimate point of view, it will be recognized that nothing in our national life has done so much to foster the spirit of democracy, of spontaneous community thought and sense of solidarity as this free association of citizens upon the common ground of civic interest, of acquaintance, of neighborhood in the schoolhouse in the early days.

The writer visited Salt Lake City and went to the Temple Grounds. He was fortunate enough to find one of the pioneers to guide him about the place. The old man took him through the several buildings, and explained the significance of each object of interest. Last, of course, he led him through the Tabernacle, pointing out its unobstructed view, and acoustic perfection. When, finally, they stood at the gate, the old guide said, "Are there any questions you would like to ask?"

"There is one," answered the visitor, "one that I would like to have you answer, not as a Mormon to a gentile, but just as a man to a man."

"What is it?" said the elder.

"I'd like to have you tell me whether you folks are as happy as you used to be."

The old man looked at his questioner.

"Are you referring to plural marriage?" he asked.

"No," said the questioner.

For a moment the old man looked away thoughtfully. Then he said: "It is strange. In the early days we were poor. We had to get along not only without luxuries, but often without what we now call necessities. And yet—we were happier in those days. It is queer, for we thought if we could have lands, and buildings, if we could have property and wealth, then we should be happier. And now we have them, and we are not as happy as we used to be. It's strange."

"What is the reason?" asked the other.

"I'll tell you the reason," said the elder. "There is just one reason. It is because, in the old days, we *felt together*, and now we don't. The very things that we strove for have come in to separate us in our fellowship. Then we *felt* together, and the hardship and poverty didn't cut in, for we were one. And now we aren't, and our possessions don't make up at all for what we've lost."

Now, this old man was speaking not only for those of us who wear a denominational name. What he said was true of all of us Americans. We have lost the old sense of unity, of neighborship, which we knew in the simple early days. Our inventions and our acquisitions as a people have not added to our happiness because we no longer *feel* together. What is the remedy? To go back to the simple conditions of the early days?

No. We could not, if we would, and we do not want to. The great joyous task is to reach our hands across, and find unity in the midst of our rich diversity. For fifty years, we have yielded to the centrifugal force of extreme individualism which has flung us apart to our specializations. Now we are coming back, for the great





force in society to-day is not centrifugal, but centripetal. We have had our time of social analysis. Now, strong, irresistible comes the impulse of social synthesis. We have gone apart to seek our separate wealths, and now, to make our separated seekings and findings worth while, we are coming back like hunters to the camp to talk over our various adventures, and to throw down at the common camp fire the prizes of our achievement.

"The very forces that have been drawing us apart into groups and classes have been making us sick of our artificial separations," says former United States Commissioner E. E. Brown, in speaking of the social center movement. "There is really arising a hunger for neighborliness, and it is most keenly felt in the very environment where the old-fashioned neighborliness is most impossible. When we go to Europe and meet in the Trosachs or Unter den Linden the man from over the way, we greet him as a friend, though we hardly recognized him at home. When we return to our own street and resume our ordinary ways, the chances are ten to one that we shall drop back into indifference. The lines of association do not nowadays run straight from our door to our nearest neighbor's door. Our shortest way to him is round by some common meeting place where we join with him in a common cause. Then it is that we find how much we need him and need to know him."

When this impulse comes to the older ones among us it is not a vague, new call to an unknown gathering place, but a clear summoning to come *back* along familiar paths that meet at a place we know. It is the spirit of the older American that sounds in Edna Murray Ketcham's "Song of Neighborhood":



Come close and let us wake the joy  
 Our fathers used to know,  
 When to the little old schoolhouse  
 Together they would go;  
 Then neighbor's heart to neighbor warmed  
 In thought for common good;  
 We'll strike that fine old chord again—  
 A song of neighborhood.

The fathers clove the wilderness  
 And made a clearing here,  
 Then at its heart, this friendly roof,  
 They joined their hands to rear;  
 And here they met and talked and planned  
 A larger common weal.  
 Their future we are living now.  
 We, here, their purpose feel.

Out in the world we all have learned  
 Hardness of toil and care;  
 It's tried our souls and shorn our youth  
 Of dreams and visions fair.  
 In worry for self we may have lost  
 The larger hope and claim;  
 Come, 'neath this common roof, and here  
 We'll find its power again.

The little old red school has gone;  
 Its spirit must not go,  
 For what it to our fathers meant  
 Our present time must know.  
 Heavy the work that waits our hands;  
 Our single strength but small,  
 United here for common tasks,  
 Each finds the might of all.

There is something strange, however, about this memory of how *we* used to get together in the community place. Men *remember* it who never actually knew the spontaneous common centering of the old days. Younger men *remember* it who have always lived in the city. Eugene Wood says: "Sing of 'the little red schoolhouse on the hill and in *everybody's* heart a chord trembles in unison. As we hear its witching strains we are *all* lodge brethren—we are *all* lodge brethren, and the air is 'Auld Lang Syne,' and we are clasping hands across, knitted into one living solidarity."

✓ The reason why this drawing to the center of neighborhood seems to be a common memory, is because it answers to the demand for unity which reaches back farther than its expression in the schoolhouse meetings of the early days. One evening in a social center a man who was born and grew up in the city, and never knew the schoolhouse gatherings in his own youth, said: "Won't it be *homelike* when other cities take up this idea. One will always know that there is a friendly, interesting place, not far away, where he can spend an evening, a place where class lines, religious and political differences don't count, where people are just folks meeting on common ground, in the common interest."

*Homelike! Why like home?*

When the beginning was made in the city of Rochester, New York, in using the schoolhouses as the deliberative headquarters of the electorate, only men were included in this civic club organization.

It was clearly recognized that if the institution of the social center is to be American, it must be democratic in its foundation. It was seen that, if the provision of club opportunities for young people, of lectures and entertainments, and the facilities for culture and recreation, which

go to make up a complete neighborhood social center, were to be superimposed upon the community from without or above by order of any well-intentioned but paternalistic agency, then there could be no real life in this institution. It was seen that its *basis* must be the all-inclusive organization of citizens in political expression.

The reason why, in the first neighborhood organized, men and women did not get together in the primary civic club was not because women are not as socially, that is, politically, minded as men—they are more politically minded than are men; but simply because if men and women gathered at the start, then it would have been difficult to have this organization clearly recognized as fundamentally and essentially governmental in its character. For, in New York State, government is still regarded as the business of a sex. Moreover, there would have been danger of having this body confused with a parent teachers' association. To be sure, the two organizations are absolutely unlike, the parent teachers' association being a gathering of those only whose center of interest is in the use of the schoolhouse as an education place for children, and so excluding those who send their children to other schools; whereas, the neighborhood civic club, having its focal center of interest at the ballot box, includes the whole citizenship. It being essential that the movement be understood in its initiation as political, only men were eligible for the foundation organization. To be sure, opportunity was offered for the women of the various communities to use the schoolhouses as meeting places, but their organization was separate.

This, at the beginning—but, by the end of the first year, when the idea had been fully established that this assembling of the members of the committee of the

whole citizenship for deliberation on public matters is in character exactly like (only "more so") the use of the city hall by the subcommittee of aldermen for their deliberation, and men had found that this use of the neighborhood building is vital, virile, actual political expression; then began the normal gathering, not of men only, but of adult human beings in one body uniting as citizens in a real democracy to talk over together the *what* and the *how* of realizing the common good. Then was established the basis, the true and necessary basis of the institution which furnishes the living nucleus of a democratic society adequate for the new demands of our time.

The race began to be human, that is, civilization began, when men and women united and remained together for the education of the child. It was not the breeding of the offspring that furnished the basis of the human family. Brutes breed. It was the long infancy of the human child, whose helplessness and whose marvellous educability required the man and the woman to stay together for its sake. It was the common equal association of men and women upon the common ground and under the common roof consecrated by the unfoldment and the training of childhood, which taught the first lessons in mutual consideration, and care for another; it was the uniting effort, and the planning together for this primary group whose center was the place of the child's education that taught the first lessons in coöperation, with which all human progress began. It was when men and women united in this little dual society whose citadel was the sacred ground of the divinest common interest, that the *home* spirit was born. Out of that primitive family group in widening circles the clan and the tribe came to be, and from that family

rootage grew the old patriarchal forms of government. And the family remains—shall ever remain, the unit group.

In the past century a tremendous change has come. Before, the greater part of all our life was spent within the circle of the household. There were carried on the industries and the arts. There, food was prepared, and covering. There, too, were found the occupations of leisure, our culture, and our play. And because, through our association together upon the common ground of the child's education there, we had learned to think and feel and enjoy in terms of the welfare of this little group within whose circle our lives were spent, the activities which we carried on, the industries and the arts, the culture and the play, were humanized.

Now, all this is changed. Out from the little household circle have gone the preparation of food, the carding of wool, the spinning, weaving, and fashioning of cloth, the making and using of tools, out into the larger circle of the neighborhood, into the street and the shop, the factory and store. These activities are now carried on, not in the spirit of mutual consideration, not with the motive of unselfishness, not with the consciousness of joy in service, but in an atmosphere whose law is that of the brute—pretense, suspicion, fear, deception, exploitation, dog-eat-dog, *caveat emptor*.

Why?

It is not that, in our dealings with each other in this wider circle where now our work and play is chiefly done, we lack the precepts of a human way, the guidance of the preached ideal. It is simply that we have not yet learned to adjust our group sense to the wider circle in which our lives are now spent. It is simply that we have not yet learned to desire, each for all, and

all for each, in terms of the larger group. We have a little family-size, "me and my wife, my son John and his wife, us four and no more," range of group feeling to cover a circle of living which has widened far beyond the household area. It is like trying to cover a square mile with a napkin.

How shall we learn to *feel* our membership in the larger community group in which our work is now done, in which our lives are now lived, as we have learned to *feel* our membership in the little household group? How shall we come really to identify our interest with the common interest of this larger group? How shall we come to sink, not as sacrifice, but as fulfilment of ourselves, our individual ambitions in the larger good of the community? How shall the home-spirit be expanded, widened to humanize our relationship to other members of this wider company?

All of our legal development tends to fix restraints upon us in our dealings with each other, to enforce honest exchange, to protect "rights" and to prevent infringements. This iron framework of compulsory order seems to be necessary. But, a society which engages men to patrol its ways, to keep its members in order with clubs, has not begun to find itself. All our education tends to widen our intellectual comprehension of our membership in this larger group, and so to develop our capacity to *think* in terms of the wider circle of our association. At the best this intellectual nexus, coming as it does, largely by way of the printed page, is mediate. No person ever lived who could express himself by writing, or who, by being described or reported, could be fully made known to another. When, for instance, we read the writings or the reported speeches of Lincoln, or the stories about him, does not our reading,

instead of satisfying, increase the wish that we might have known him, that is, met him frequently face to face, and heard him speak?

✓“There can be no *life* in a community so long as its parts are segregated and separated,” said Governor Wilson, at the First National Conference on Social Center Development. “It is just as if you separated the organs of the human body and then expected them to produce life. \* \* \* I know that a great emphasis is put upon the mind in our day, and as a university man, I should perhaps not challenge the supremacy of the intellect, but I have never been convinced that mind was really monarch in our day, or in any day that I have yet heard of. What really controls our action is feeling.” How shall we learn not only to prevent our harming each other, and not only to think clearly in terms of our membership in this widened association, but to feel, to suffer and enjoy, in terms of the larger circle of the community, as we have learned to feel in terms of the unit family?

The ready, practical, convenient answer lies in our using as a point of focused contact the common place which, in the midst of the community, has the same character as had that first center of interest which united us in the little group, where, in the unit family, the feeling of home first came to be.

This is the marvellous social significance of the public schoolhouse in each community. It is as though the members of all the little unit families had said: “The home, the little unit home, was made by the association of adults at the place of the education of the child. The capacity for mutuality was latent in the man and the woman until they associated at this place, in this atmosphere. In the larger community, the capacity for gen-



uine fellow-feeling is latent in each member. We will unite to establish in the center of this larger group that inter-est (that which is between) which gave each home its unity, and gathering there we members of the larger group shall find our unity, the home-bond, but circling wider." We have, in establishing the public school, joined hands as Pietro and Violante did to

hold high, keep clean  
Their child's soul, one soul white enough for three,  
And lift it to whatsoever star should stoop,  
What possible sphere of purer life than theirs  
Should come in aid of whiteness.

America, in the public school, has taken the child and set him in the midst as Jesus took the child and set him in the midst. The invigorating atmosphere of the child's unfoldment is the breath of life. The light of the child's presence in the thought of men and women enables them to see. The place of the children's education, at the center of the neighborhood, has in its freedom from dogma, its democratic foundation, its limitless aspiration, its vital character, not only the most powerful dynamic possibility for molding the future, but in its use by men and women to-day as a center of equal association, it has in it the certainty of developing that which cannot come by authority or study or precept, the power to feel, to suffer and enjoy, in terms of the membership of the neighborhood as now we feel, and suffer and enjoy, in terms of membership of the little household.

We talk of city sentiment, city spirit, the feeling of the city's membership. It is impossibly sudden expansion. We cannot make the leap. The distance is too far, the enlargement of vivid interest is too great, from

the little homogeneous household group to the vast heterogeneous circle of the city. We are in the situation of the Scandinavian on the dock, whose brother on the boat cried, "Yump, Ole, you can make it in two yumps." We can make it *two* jumps. We cannot "stretch our auspices" so far all at once.

To be sure, we may develop a pseudo city-spirit, a hectic town-promotion impatience whose motive is commercial. We may form a civic improvement association (forgetting that "civic" and "political" mean the same thing, *civis* being the Latin form of the Greek *polis*), and we may adopt a "city beautiful" slogan. We may seek to beautify the ugly, blotched, worry furrowed face of the community by the methods of the beauty doctor, the resort to cosmetics, rouge, paints, powders, skin-foods and patches, forgetting that social beauty can come only with social health. In our hearts we know that this commercial promotion and this specializing in the superficial are counterfeit. We can never know the genuine spirit of mutual consideration, of high joy in inter-service, out to the wide reach of the city, until we have found a half-way stepping stone, in an institution of the neighborhood, wherein men and women, associating in the clear atmosphere in which the home spirit was born, have their eyes opened and their hearts freed.

When through such acquaintance in coöperation we have become human, have carried the home spirit, to the wideness of the neighborhood, then through the federated interchange and union in the enterprise of politics, with other neighborhoods, we shall gradually push back the horizon of our real interest and fellow understanding to include the city. So, and not otherwise, shall the individual's capacity for identification of in-

terest which now reaches to the limits of the household gain in power till it can include the membership of the city. So we set out on our way to the consciousness of membership in the Association of America, which shall make of it a home-land.

✓ The experience of the man who has found the community sense through coming to know other men and women in the association of the social center is like that which an island might have if it were conscious. It stands by itself out there in the sea. It looks across at other islands or groups of islands. They seem entirely separate. And they are—at the surface. But suppose that island looks down beneath the surface. The deeper it goes, the less the separation from the other islands becomes, until it sees that down at the roots of its being, it and the other islands are all one earth. All the lands there are, are islands. Some are larger, and we call them continents, and some are smaller; but all are islands, and, no matter how high they reach, or how varied their surface differences, the greater part of each is down beneath the surface. The greater part of each is that which each has in common with all the others. The greater part of each island is the one earth. So, as a man becomes acquainted with people, who, superficially, seem different, separate; as he comes to coöperate upon such a common ground as that which the schoolhouse use offers, he comes to know that the greatest of our interests are not the individual, nor even the little group interests, but that the big, important, fundamental interests are those we have in common. He comes to know that down beneath the surface the greater part of each of us is humanity.

So have we made the start toward that identification of ourselves with mankind which alone can enable us

to appropriate our heritage as human beings. "God gave all men all earth to love," says Kipling, and then he strikes the false note of all his glorification of provincialism in his acceptance of human narrowness as though it were inescapable, "But since man's heart is small,——" But man's heart is not small. He has only been using a little part of it.

Obviously, this development in the midst of the community of the place where the home spirit may find a radiant point for nucleating our common life, does not mean to rob the unit home. It means to protect the unit home. To-day we are human within the family group and not human outside. We can no more remain half coöperative and half competitive than we could remain half slave and half free. Either the home spirit shall take the neighborhood, the city, the state, the nation, the world; or the unit home itself will be commercialized.

So far from injuring the little unit household is this development of a homelike institution at the center of the neighborhood that its effect is exactly the contrary, for it gives to the members of the household a center of common interest wherein their equal unity is strengthened if it exists, and established where it does not exist. There is many a family in which there is on the part of the man a petty assumption of authority and self-assertion, and on the part of the woman a slavish spirit of subordination, of self-effacement, and in their association never a glint of the joy of equal companionship. What it means for such a household to have the father and mother come to know each other on the equal common ground of a neighborhood center of democracy, was told by a small boy in Rochester. "Gee!" he said. "Things is differ'nt at our house. Ma an' everybody

used to shut up an' listen when Pa talked politics. Now you'd think him and Ma was both runnin' the city."

Men by themselves cannot develop the human attitude of the *home* spirit in dealing with public affairs. They cannot do it in the community. Usually a man taking care of the house, when his wife is away, soils the dishes and fails to wash them, uses the beds and fails to make them, leaves milk in the ice-box till it sours, distributes his clothes in wild disorder about the place, never dreams of sweeping, and in a short time has the house looking—as if a man were taking care of it alone. Even though he be precise and orderly, even though things are put in place, and everything kept neat, or he have servants to do these things, even then the place is not a home. The system may be there, but the spirit is not. And if there are children to be cared for, the situation becomes tragic. The cities look as if they had been administered by men alone.

✓Men, gathering by themselves to plan out the welfare of the neighborhood, the welfare of the town and state and nation, can never develop in their planning or in their plans the neighborhood spirit which is the next-size expression of the home-spirit. To be sure, there are neighborly activities for which men may well get together alone, but they are recreational. The primary and serious business of discussing the together problems of politics cannot be sane and normal, without the participation of the women of the community. For politics, the administration of the coöperation that we call "government," belongs to-day far more to the province of women than to that of men. Indeed, if we are to discriminate, we find that government is coming to be entirely the ordering and administration of women's special sphere.

What is women's sphere as distinguished from that of men?

To-day in trades and professions, industries and arts, men and women are working side by side. Only by turning back to the simple conditions of primitive living, among the American aborigines, for instance, may the two spheres of activity be distinguished. The woman is engaged in grinding corn, preparing food, plaiting baskets, molding pottery, carding wool, weaving blankets, drawing and fetching water, caring for and educating the children, ordering the care of the camp or village, transporting the burdens when the camp is moved—in short, in all the industries and arts of the primitive Indian. The man is engaged in—war. He does the killing of other animals, and he spends his leisure in gambling, but his characteristic activity is war.

With the process of discovery and invention there have come great changes in the methods of carrying on the work of woman's sphere. Instead of the little stone mortar and pestle with which she ground corn, we have the great roller mills. Instead of the earthen jar in which she carried water we have the municipal water systems. Instead of the simple method by which she, with or without the aid of a horse, transported the burdens, we have the railroad systems, and her business of ordering, caring for, keeping clean and attractive the camp or village has grown tremendously with the increase of the modern city and state.

Changes have come also in man's proper sphere. Instead of the simple tools of destruction, such as tomahawk and bow, he has developed very elaborate machinery for tearing people to pieces and destroying

property, and he has elaborated the methods of gambling.

In the early days, politics, the business of government, consisted chiefly in devising means and methods of doing harm, in councils of war. Then it was man's business. But, as we have progressed in intelligence, this aim of government has become obsolete until the only way that we can continue to set apart a great number of men from useful service and spend vast sums of money in constructing artificial volcanoes, is by pretending that this is to prevent war. In other words, government has become almost entirely counselling for human welfare instead of hurt.

This is women's business, and while men should participate, they are awkward at it, and they cannot be expected to do it well alone. Men, with their age-old habit of selfishness, hostility, suspicion, craft, developed through thousands of years of glorifying blood lust, carry on the industries and the arts with the old war motive and manner, and by themselves make even of the together business of promoting order and coöperation, the business of government, a fighting proposition and a game.

In caring for the community, the city, the state, it is unquestionably important that women should participate on equal footing with men in the final decisions at the ballot box, but it is infinitely more important that women should participate with men on equal footing in the deliberation upon the questions of common welfare, which precede the vote.

Where women are franchised, they of course will be equal voting members in the neighborhood organization of the citizenship, but where they are not yet franchised, they should still be regarded as members for discussion.



What this opportunity for gathering with other men and women in the weekly deliberation at the neighborhood social center, means to the individual woman, is expressed in the words of one who spoke from her own experience :

The social center comes to the rescue of the middle-aged woman in the bitterest hour of her life. The average woman who brings up a family of children on the average wage must do all her own housework, her sewing and mending. The constant demands of little children on her time and energy leave her little opportunity to read or to think of anything besides the work in hand. She is probably happy in this, and looks forward to the time when her children grow up. Then they go to high school, or they go out into the world.

Mingling with people of different training and greater advantages, they no longer think mother's decision on any matter final. She is suddenly aware some day that she is not her daughter's equal; that she is no longer a fountain of wisdom as she was to her little children, that she is ignorant and hopelessly behind the times. She struggles against this conviction, but facts are stubborn things, and at last she faces the truth.

What shall she do? What can she do?

She goes to the social center. There she finds people with the same desire for self-improvement, the same want of training, and she also finds people of superior ability and experience who are ready to help her while they are helping themselves. She hears addresses on the great questions of the day. She hears matters of municipal interest explained and discussed, and she is delighted to find that she can understand them. She gains courage. After a little she takes part in a debate, and before the season is over she is able to take part in the discussion and to express intelligent opinions. The woman has found herself. Her children look at her with new interest and begin to take pride in her.

Instead of the complaining, dissatisfied, nervous woman she was fast becoming, the social center has given to her family and her community a bright, well-informed, useful American citizen.

This is what a woman says that she receives from the opportunity of participation in the neighborhood common council. What she gives is far more.

When Tom Tynan, who later became the remarkably successful Warden of the Colorado State Penitentiary, asked Judge Lindsey whether he supposed that the principle on which he acts with boys would work with adult criminals, Judge Lindsey replied: "Why, of course. Men are just boys in long trousers."

"Why isn't somebody trying that principle with men?" asked Tynan.

"Why aren't you?" responded Judge Lindsey.

"I?" exclaimed Tynan. "Why, I don't know anything about criminology." He was a business man at the time.

"If you did," answered Judge Lindsey, "you wouldn't be fit for the job."

What Judge Lindsey meant was that the orthodox and established method of dealing with criminals is all wrong, and that the efficient man for this work would be the one who, coming to it mind-free, would apply the principles of common sense, and that so a man's value would be spoiled by learning the old ways.

In the fact that women, as a rule, have not the habit of thinking in terms of orthodox "political" method, is the great value of the contribution which they can make to intelligent and effective political administration. Orthodox methods in the treatment of criminals perpetuate the expression of the obsolete attitude of fear-impelled and angry retaliation developed when the criminal was regarded as an enemy to be punished. The efficient

man for dealing with criminals is the one who comes to the work, free from the habit of action which reflected that false conception. Orthodox methods in the administration of public business perpetuate an idea of government which is obsolete, not merely on account of a development of humane thinking, but on account of the complete change of character of the government. The orthodox political method was developed when the public welfare was to be conserved by preventing the encroachments of a sovereign above the people in authority. The whole check and balance, block and hinder, clog and hamper, political system that we have, was constructed as though to fit a monarchical form of government, as though the president were a sovereign from whose tyrannies the people are to be protected, and not at all as though he were what he actually is, the agent and hired servant of the people, the chairman or president of the association of American citizens. The bicameral system established in the national government and copied in the state and local governments is simply the perpetuation of the form which was logical when there was one class of lords and another of commons, whose delegates were set to protect the separate interests of these two classes. This system is manifestly absurd when so far as political prerogatives are concerned there is only one class. It is simply the appointment of two duplicating, responsibility shifting and mutually hampering subcommittees, charged with the same commission by the committee of the whole citizenship in city or state or nation. The party division method also is simply the holdover from the condition in which society was stratified into classes, differing in political power.

We are slowly working toward an adjustment of the

forms of government to the idea that the men whose salaries we pay are our hired men, that they are simply committees or agents whose work it is to serve the associated citizenship which employs them. We have already established this idea in many municipalities, where the people have adopted government through or by commission, that is, through a committee, to work out the details of the common business of the people's association of the city. The proposal has been made in at least one state that one of the two houses of the state legislature be abolished. To be sure, the proposal there is that the English system of responsible party government be substituted, but this is a step toward administration of the details of the business of the state association of citizens through a single subcommittee of the committee of the whole electorate. And a bill has been introduced into the national legislature to abolish the United States Senate and so to apply the same principle of government by commission, that is, administration of the details of the people's business through a subcommittee of the committee of the whole citizenship.

It is of tremendous importance that the public machinery for getting things done in the common interest should be simplified and made direct, because the present complicated and tangled system not only makes easy, but invites, interference by groups of people who have special interests to serve, that is, who would secure privilege or protect themselves in levying private tribute of various kinds upon the citizens. Not only are men and volunteer organizations spending inefficiently enormous amounts of energy in seeking otherwise than by the regular political channel to influence the agents of the citizens in their actions, as when letters are poured in to "your senator" or "your representative"

to offset "special interest" lobbies, et cetera, but there has appeared a large and apparently growing group of people who frankly say that the political machinery is a useless outfit by means of which to get anything done, and, turning aside from the ballot box, they resort to "direct action." One, of course, can have no sympathy with the appeal to force in adjustment, whether among individuals or among such groups as nations; but the fact that *direct action* is contrasted with *political action* is a distinct indictment of our whole present system; for direct action is simply another term for efficiency, and, if the political method is not the most direct method possible, barring, of course, the fool's method of force, then it is not good political method.

Changes in form of government machinery, as in the physical organism, come in response to the demand of new functioning. Necessity is the mother of invention. When the flood struck Galveston, the people suddenly became conscious that the business of getting things done in the common interest was important, and they quickly substituted a committee of the citizenship who should serve as an efficient tool for their service, in place of the old ornamental structure which they had supported *over* them. In other words, they suddenly saw that the common business is too important to have its doing made the occasion for men's running around in circles and playing shuttle-cock.

In the process of smoothly, speedily, and intelligently readjusting our machinery of administration to the democratic idea, and making it, for the town, the state, and the nation, the efficient agency of our collective self-service, there is the greatest possible advantage in the participation of women with men in the discussion of what to do and how to do it; for women, by their train-

ing, come to the problem of administering these affairs with the common sense attitude to which men are only slowly approaching. Women, with their training in the administration of the affairs of the little household, come to the problem of handling the affairs of the city as the problem of administering a larger household, and to the problem of the state and the nation with the same attitude. Being more sensitive than men are, the importance of getting things done in the common interest of the larger household of the city, the state, the nation, makes them intelligently impatient of waste effort, unreasonable delay, and of political processes which, by the democratic standard of our time, have no reason for being perpetuated.

It is just because women have this simple and direct attitude, which is at once the common-sense and the scientific attitude, that it is so unfortunate that all over the country women are now meeting by themselves, seeking to prepare themselves to have an intelligent part in public business administration by studying "civics," trying to master the forked, tortuous, check-and-balance technique of inefficiency, as though the present ways of getting things done in the common interest were reasonable ways.

The greatest contribution that women can make in political affairs, they can make by coming just as they are, bringing to the discussion of what to do and how to do it in seeking city, state, and national welfare their native sense of administrative directness. Every day spent in the study of the old politics or civics in meetings by themselves is lessening the value of the contribution which they can make.

If, for instance, Tom Tynan had come to the direction of that state penitentiary after a long training in

study of orthodox methods of dealing with criminals, he would have seen nothing strange in the fact that men's heads were clipped and kept shorn in prison. It was because he was mind-free that he asked the prison barber, whom he saw at work:

"What are you cutting his hair so close for, when winter is coming on; does he want it done that way?"

"Why, that's the way we always have done," answered the barber.

"But what's the sense of it?" asked Tynan.

"Sense? Why, I don't know," said the barber.

"Well," said Tynan, "it looks foolish to me. If you could make people good by cutting their hair, we ought to have barbershops in place of churches. If you can find any good reason for doing it, come in and tell me. If you can't—quit it."

If Miss Anna Murphy had come to her position as superintendent of street-cleaning in the stock-yard district of Chicago with the orthodox habit of thought about such a political position, she would have used the public funds appropriated for this work in building a little personal machine by giving easy jobs in exchange for votes. As it was, she came without any "political" ideas, and used the funds put into her hands to clean up and beautify the neighborhood, just as though it were a matter of taking care of a larger household.

This does not mean, of course, that expert knowledge is not needed in the administration of public business. It is needed, and it will be far more likely to be secured when political problems are recognized as simply always and only how to advance the common group welfare.

The coöperation of women with men in such common counselling upon political matters as the schoolhouse invites is of the greatest importance, just because their



minds are undistorted by their having learned to think of public service as a matter of party division, of thwarting and intrigue, of craft and red tape. Their participation will, if they do not first learn to think of political matters otherwise than as larger household problems, shift the center of interest in politics to its normal place, the welfare of the child, which furnishes the one racially and practically true standard of judgment in human affairs, the one sane point of view in politics.

Miss Zona Gale pictures the thought of the typical woman as it has been shown in real life in many such a citizens' council, in the words of *Calliope Marsh* at a social center gathering of *Friendship Village*:

I see them, mothers to the whole world. And they wasn't coming with poultices and bread and broth in their hands to patch up. No, sir. Their eyes was lit with a look that was a new look and that give new life. And I looked across at that row of tired men, not so very much dressed up, and I thought:

"You're the men of this world and we're the women. And there ain't no more thrilling fact in this universe, save one, *save one*,—and that is that we're all human beings, and that your job and ours is to make the world ready for the folks that are to come. Yet, over there by Black Hollow one of our children is dying from something that was your job and ours to do, and we didn't take hold and do it."

This centering of interest at the point of true perspective in all civilization; and the use of the common building which is the one expression of the heart of democracy, as the headquarters of all political coöperation, means to make the neighborhood *feel* like home. There is nothing that can stand against the freedom and great achievement of a people whose neighborhoods feel like home—whose neighborhood feels like home.

## CHAPTER VI

### PRACTICAL POLITICS

When the political organization of any neighborhood becomes animate, that is, when the neighbors gather in the schoolhouse and effect the deliberative coördination which includes all those who are bound together by the obligation for voting, then the business before them is, of course, politics—practical politics.

This term, as it has been misapplied, has usually been preceded by the verb “play.”

Appropriately.

A child plays school teaching, that is, it pretends to carry on the activities of the person whose proper business it is to teach school. For the school teacher, his profession may be enjoyable, but it is not a plaything. Men “play” politics, that is, they pretend to be the citizenship whose proper business it is to control and direct public matters. For the citizenship politics is not ducks and drakes. The devising of coöperations, the consideration of and agreement upon rules, the finding and commissioning of capable servants is fascinating, and has the zest of a great adventurous enterprise, but being the citizens’ proper business, it is not for them a game. And when any individual or private corporation is found “playing” politics, it is *prima facie* evidence that he or they are pretending.

Practical politics.

Where and how begin? A thousand and one matters national, state, municipal, press forward for consideration. It may be that, at the time of the organization of the body, a "campaign" is "on" and the comparative merits of various applicants for public employment demand consideration; or it may be that, indeed it will be that, special questions concerning national, state, and municipal welfare cry for attention. They come, crowding, great complex problems, the cost of living, trust control, taxation, specific propositions, the parcels' post, the fortification or neutralization of the Panama Canal, rate regulation, public ownership of this or that utility; and the question before the newly organized council of the citizens, as it becomes conscious in any degree of its responsibility, as a section of the first and final legislature, a branch of the real supreme court, is: Where and how begin?

The answer is: Begin at the beginning; take up first the public matter that is right at hand. Every neighborhood organization of the electorate in city or country has, as soon as it is formed, business of duty and great opportunity immediately before it which should be given right of way, which should be regarded as unfinished business, and which should be taken up at once.

To be sure, the individual in any neighborhood who first grasps the possibilities and recognizes the need of community organization, may take advantage of the fact that the public interest is roused to a particular question, and make the arranging of one or more meetings to consider that question the means of getting the people together. For instance, in one Wisconsin town, the people were stirred and awakened to the fact that the town was being made a "hang-out for hobos." The

editor of the town paper proposed that the local delegate to the state legislature come before the citizens assembled in the schoolhouse at the initial organization meeting and speak upon "What the state is doing or planning to obviate the tramp nuisance." This consideration of a live issue in this way served as a demonstration of the value of such an organization in connecting the community up with the state subcommittee in its work, and because it brought the people out, served to give the organization a running start.

In Ohio, Henry W. Elson, the historian, a member of the constitutional convention, says that the delegates found the greatest benefit in addressing citizenship gatherings in their home districts and participating there in the discussion with the voters upon the various constitutional propositions, week by week, when the delegates visited their homes during convention recesses. Here were questions for the consideration of which citizens were conscious of the need of assembling. Their live interest made these gatherings practical and general, and furnished the opportunity of vigorous large organization at the start. In the same way, the fact that a campaign is afoot, and that the citizens are "on their toes" over the selection of public servants, national, state, local, may well be taken advantage of by arranging at the first or second meeting of the neighborhood organization to have the claims of the various candidates for election presented, either in person or by deputies. In this way the participation of many of the citizens in the initial organization meetings may be secured.

But the "big business," the *practical* politics, which every neighborhood organization should center interest upon just as soon as it has well started, is the consideration of the neighborhood's own needs, and the first mat-

ter upon which the citizens should take action is the supplying of these immediate needs. By this method, the people in any community not only secure benefits of the greatest importance which can be secured for their neighborhood in no other way without paternalism, but by this method the actual consciousness of what government means in a democracy develops through joining in first-hand coöperative creation.

Taken in their logical order, the first matter of practical politics which every adult neighborhood body should focus its interest upon is the provision of the means whereby the young men and young women, the older boys and girls of the neighborhood may have such opportunity for training in civic capacity as will fit them for the duties which they are soon to assume, and such wholesome recreation opportunities as they must have if they are to develop physically deep-chested, strong-limbed, clear-eyed, and are to be educated socially in the spirit of democracy. In other words, the first practical opportunity and duty of each adult citizens' body is to secure provision by which the young men and young women of the neighborhood may have opportunity to use the schoolhouse as a club house for organizations modeled upon their own.

The adult organization includes both men and women in one body. The young people should have two separate organizations, one of young men, the other of young women, using the schoolhouse on different evenings of the week for their meetings. With the adult organization, the publicly employed servant is a secretary, who is under the authority of the citizens' body. With the young people's clubs the persons employed are over them in authority. With the adults, the primary interest and responsibility is in the consideration of pub-

lic questions; with young people it is most desirable that along with the club opportunities, there should be facilities for physical activities, both indoor and out, and for wholesome recreation. This implies the necessity not only of having the neighborhood civic secretary, usually the principal of the school, engage directors for boys' and girls' club meetings and activities, but also implies the securing of gymnasium equipment, indoor and out, and the engagement of directors of physical training. It may be, and it usually is, desirable to divide the boys into two organizations, and the girls likewise, but this division should be made not into two sets or cliques of the same age, but should be made between those who are from seventeen years of age to twenty, and those who are under seventeen, but out of school. The membership should include every boy, or every girl of the neighborhood who is out of school in the club which is proper to his or her age just as the adult club includes as a member every citizen in the district.

In the city of Rochester, where the older boys' club in each social center was called the "Coming Civic Club," and the younger was called the "Future Civic Club" (the girls chose more individual and less uniform terminology for their organizations), the plan was followed at the start of setting the lowest age limit at fourteen, and admitting boys and girls above that age, on their respective evenings, without regard to their day school enrollment. This plan was soon abandoned for several reasons, chief among which was the fact that, as a rule, there was not room enough for both sets of boys, and it was felt that fairness demanded that if a boy had the benefit of using the neighborhood house during the day, then the fellow who could not have that "privilege" should have the right of way in the evening. (Notice

the word "privilege." It was used by one of the boys who had been compelled to leave school to earn money for the support of his family, and the effect of this attitude was shown in the strange idea which the principal noticed that the pupils of the day school were getting. He said: "When the children see grownups and older fellows come here, not because they have to, but because they want to, it seems to suggest the extraordinary idea that it is a 'privilege' to come to this building.")

The reason why the adult civic body, the actual deliberative political organization, should be effected first is not only because, in this way alone, can the development of the complete social center be democratic, that is, come in response to the expressed will of the citizens of the community, but because only in this way can the young people have before them the example of civic expression which gives to their gathering the meaning and purpose which makes it genuine citizenship training. Where the man is there is the boy's heart, also. When the adults of the community are using the neighborhood building for actual political expression in common council then the idea of citizenship is visualized and the young men and young women have the model before them which makes of their club activities civic apprenticeship.

Within the past few years, the vast importance of making provision for the associational needs of young people that the gang spirit, which is the natural exhibition of the civic instinct, the first outreaching of group feeling, may find expression in wholesome forms, and for the recreational needs of young people that they may learn in practice that most important lesson, that it is possible to have the best sort of fun without doing harm, has been recognized. This recognition has caused



much effort to be expended to meet this common need through special and private agencies.

Perhaps the first considerable institution developed to provide for the young men and young women between school age and maturity was of the Y. M. C. A. type. The Young Men's Christian Association started as a purely evangelical movement in which people of different Protestant churches united for the conversion of young men. There were added to this religiously sectarian institution, cultural and recreational features partly because it was seen that, if young men were to practice the clean, wholesome living which their Christian profession implied, they must have opportunity for clean, wholesome club association and recreation, partly because the provision of gymnasium, bowling alley, reading room and club opportunities would serve to draw young men into the environment where they might be reached by Protestant church influences and partly because men and women were coming to see that, aside from all special "religious" considerations, young men imperatively need the opportunity for clean, wholesome club association and recreation.

In the fact that the Y. M. C. A. is a joint enterprise of most of the Protestant churches, it is inter-denominational, but in the fact that its propagation, and full membership in it are limited to Protestants, it is sectarian. That is to say, it does not include Catholics, Jews and those unaffiliated with religious sects, on equal terms. The logical and natural result of the establishment of the Y. M. C. A. by the Protestants of any community is the establishment of a C. M. B. A. by the Catholics, and a J. Y. M. A. by the Jews, and also the establishment of institutions for young women which correspond to these provisions for young men. This result is not

always accomplished, because these other sects are not everywhere numerous or wealthy enough to develop such institutions for their young men, and in comparatively few communities is there enough energy left, after provision has been made in this way by private effort for young men, to develop similar facilities for young women. But girls and Catholic and Hebrew boys are either provided for by their own religious organizations, or they are not provided for at all, so far as full membership in this sort of association is concerned.

On one side the Y. M. C. A., the J. Y. M. A., the C. M. B. A. and the corresponding young women's institutions, are carrying on the activities that belong in the field of the church. That is, they are all sectarianly religious. On the other side each of them is privately operating in the field of common enterprise. On the one side each of them is duplicating the work of the churches; on the other side they are duplicating the work of each other. There is a difference between the modes of worship carried on in these separate institutions, but there is no slightest difference between the parliamentary usage followed in the club activities in one and that followed in another. There are differences between the sacred books used in these several organizations, but there is no difference between the basket-ball rule books which they use in their several gymnasiums.

The fact that this method of provision has, even with the most strenuous efforts, proved wholly inadequate is not the greatest reason why thoughtful men and women are seeking to promote such provision as will not involve duplication where there is no reason for duplication. It is plain that only a very small percentage of the young men and women in the cities, and practically none of the young men and women in the country are

provided by this means with the opportunities for wholesome club association and recreation which all young men and women need. The greatest reason, however, for recognizing that the common associational and recreational needs of youth should be provided through a single public agency, while the various churches assume the work of religious service to the young people of their several sects is because the method of supplying these common needs through duplicating institutions having sectarian connections on their religious side, tends to carry the wedge of division into the field where there is no reason for division, but every reason for community action. It tends to make gymnasium activities and other forms of recreation a ground of sectarian partition when it is normally a common ground in which division and duplication have no justification. What is worse, it tends to make the training in club activities, the training for citizenship, which is right only as it is broad in sympathy and understanding, and entirely free from sectarian bias, itself sectarian, so that the young men and young women come to the duties of citizenship not with the all-inclusive social and civic habit of thought developed through association with young people of different religious and home training, but with a view point limited and narrowed, by which henceforth they tend to look at questions of the common welfare with a sectarian slant entirely out of harmony with the democratic idea of "separation of church and state."

It is no question of competition between the Y. M. C. A., the C. M. B. A., and other semi-religious institutions on the one hand and the citizenship as a whole on the other, for it is coming to be generally recognized that this provision for citizenship training and recreation for young men and young women is a part of the com-

munity's function of education and, just as the teaching of reading and writing which was once furnished to the few by semi-religious institutions came to be taken over by the state and made common to all, so these other forms of education. In this movement the men and women who are engaged in the work of the Y. M. C. A., and other institutions of this type are among the most earnest advocates of the community's self-service in provision for young people through social center development. The leaders in the various churches recognize that these institutions are duplicating the work of the churches on the one hand, and are inadequately, expensively and divisively competing in a field in which there is no reason for the waste of competition, on the other.

The attitude of the typical minister is expressed in the words of a leading clergyman in a middle-western city, recently spoken: "Some time ago, when I began to recognize the need of a recreation place, especially for young people, I thought of building a parish house in connection with my church. I then thought it would be more economical to unite forces with others in the building of a Y. M. C. A. To-day I see that the money that a Y. M. C. A. would cost, would go many times farther and would benefit all the young people instead of only a few, if it were contributed through the regular channels of public coöperation and spent in securing equipment and supervision for the use of the school-houses and grounds during the time they are now idle, for club activities and physical training. This is just as educational as the study of books, it is the common business of the community." The fact that the attitude here expressed is not limited to the men of any denomination or sect is illustrated in the case of Stanley, Wis-

consin. Here the use of the high school building as a "people's club house" came about as a result of the united leadership of the Lutheran pastor, the Roman Catholic priest and the Presbyterian minister.

Another special method of answering the problem of wholesome training and recreation for boys and girls is the recent Boy Scout movement with its auxiliary expression in the Girls' Guard or Camp Fire Girls' organization. This movement when promoted by sectarian institutions is open to the same objection as the Y. M. C. A. as carrying the division which belongs to the field of church activity into common fields of expression which have no reason for being sectarianly divided.

Even when some of the non-military elements of the Boy Scout idea are incorporated in the work of the regular public schools, as undoubtedly they should be, this method of seeking to answer the need of young men and young women for such wholesome associational and recreational opportunities as will furnish training for citizenship, absolutely breaks down at the most important point. The Boy Scout idea and practise fail to hold the interest of the youth at sixteen or seventeen when the dress-up, play-soldier, big-Injun period is past.

The same objection holds with the World Scout movement inaugurated by Sir Henry Vane. He evidently was not informed by Lord Roberts, General Baden-Powell, Lord Beresford and the other members of the "military cabal" who are the chief promoters of the Boy Scout movement that this movement is *not* a "kindergarten for militarism." He seemed to regard it so as a result of his investigation at its home in England, and devised the World Scout idea whose spirit should be that of helpfulness instead of hurt, of world-brotherhood instead

of war. It may be asked: If a boy or a man love not his neighborhood which he has seen, how can he love the world which he has not seen? It may be suggested that the natural line of development of the group sense is not to attempt to leap from the unit family sense to the world feeling and then come back to neighborhood sympathy, but to progress from family to neighborhood, to city, to state, to nation, to world comprehension. Granting the superiority of the spirit and underlying idea of the World Scout movement over that of the Boy Scout movement, they are alike in the fact that they belong to the grade school period of the boy and do not answer at all the need for civic training between the grade school age and maturity.

If not a Y. M. C. A., how about building a separate recreation center? Twenty years ago a group of people in Chicago applied to the school board in that city to have one of the schoolhouses opened for use in the evening by the young men as a club house. There being no organization of the voters in the neighborhood with power to enforce the request and with authority to order this use of public money, the school-board after considering the relative rights of the mice and the young men to the use of these buildings in the evening declared in favor of the mice, and refused the request. Thereupon the energy of these volunteer "soldiers of the common good" was turned to the securing of special buildings and grounds which could be used for the gathering and recreation of the community, especially the young people. So began the movement for building separate buildings and securing separate grounds as recreation centers.

Thus far in Chicago nearly twenty million dollars has been spent in getting this duplicate neighborhood

building and ground equipment, and the result is that there are seventeen of these establishments serving seventeen neighborhoods. This same amount of money, if it had been put into adding to the equipment and supplying the supervision needed for the full use of the school plants would mean that instead of seventeen neighborhoods being especially favored, every neighborhood in the city would be supplied with a wholesome recreation center, and the school system of Chicago, instead of being (until recently) one of the worst in the country, would be a model for the world.

The failure of the citizens first to organize a voters' league or neighborhood civic association which with its meetings in the schoolhouse would furnish the model upon which the young people's recreational activities would shape themselves with a core of civic training, and which would have a right to give directions to the school board, which failure led to the duplicating of neighborhood plants, has not only cost Chicago tremendously, but it has injured the whole country. For, in many cities, the Chicago field house idea has been copied, with the naturally resulting loss to the school system itself, and the great loss to the communities, of efficiency and unity in their neighborhood equipment. And not only have cities suffered, but small towns also. For instance, in Merrill, Wisconsin, a few years ago, A. Stange, a wealthy lumberman who had come to the town as a poor boy, desiring to repay the community for some of the benefits he had derived from it, decided to make provision for the recreational needs of the young people. The Chicago field house duplication suggested the way, and he built a handsome building equipped with gymnasium and club rooms. He thought that if he furnished the building the citizens would maintain



its supervision. For two years the building stood vacant. Then it was torn down.

If, instead of following the Chicago plan he had given the money which the building would cost to the school board to be used in adding recreational equipment and the necessary supervision which would make the schoolhouse completely useful, ill-feelings and antagonism would not have developed and, within a very short time, the community would have found the great benefit of this recreational equipment, would have appreciated its necessity and would have assumed the expense of its maintenance. This Chicago method of building separate neighborhood buildings for that form of education which goes under the name recreation has hurt the rural communities; for it has suggested that the provision of recreational opportunities is a very expensive community undertaking which requires the securing of new property, and so the attempt to influence a body of public servants otherwise than by organized citizenship expression, and the stupidity (or worse) of a school-board, brought it about that the great splendid recreational impulse has been for a time diverted from its normal American channel of expression through the increase of the use of the school plant in every community.

To-day, the great leaders of the movement for rescuing the recreational life of us all, and especially the young, from the degradation incident to its commercial exploitation, recognize that the schoolhouse and ground is the natural recreation center. For instance, Clark W. Hetherington, the philosopher of recreation, the author of "The Normal Course in Play," says:

✓ To make the play of all the young people of the nation efficient three things are essential: First, there must be a

permanent agency whose business it shall be to organize the play life of all for efficiency. Second there must be leadership by a permanently employed staff. Third, there must be centers that give play opportunities in a wholesome environment.

The only permanent agency that is potentially fitted to reach all the young people of the nation is the public school. The little district schoolhouse, now grown in some of our cities to a great steel and brick palace, with its staff of teachers and its local and state administrative machinery, is the nation-wide institution. It is a permanent agency, a powerful one, and the backbone of our destinies as a nation. The public school is everywhere, the public school teacher is everywhere, and the schoolhouse and school yard are the natural community center.

Experience has shown that the playground does not, as a rule, draw children from a district of more than a quarter mile in radius, nor the older young people from more than half a mile. In Chicago, with its famous small park and field house system, one can ride for miles in almost any direction and see thousands of children playing in the streets or in dirty vacant lots, without either equipment or supervision. Yet, Chicago has spent enormous sums for the construction of this equipment and is spending \$300,000 a year for maintenance, and all for one section of the city.

It seems clear, therefore, that society cannot afford to duplicate the school system to make Nature's means of education efficient, while the school plant and the school administrative machinery stand idle.

What Professor Hetherington is to the philosophy of play, Dr. Luther H. Gulick has been to the promotion of public recreation. He was the organizer and first president of the Playground and Recreation Association of America. Speaking of recreational activities as a part of the community's "social life," he says: "The school plant is the *natural* focal point of the com-

munity's social life since it centers the universal interest—and cuts through social, religious and even racial lines.”

Not only have men outside of Chicago come to see the wisdom of making the schoolhouse and ground the single common center of adult civic expression and of recreation for the whole community, but Edward B. DeGroot, the man who from the beginning has had charge of the activities carried on in the South Park buildings and grounds agrees absolutely with the position that this plan of duplication of neighborhood equipment is extravagant, inefficient and wrong in principle and practice, and the schoolhouses in Chicago are now being opened for wider use.

It may be well to consider here whether the public school, as it is now developed, as merely an education place for children, does not meet the needs of American life, whether in the course of time, the use of the schoolhouse simply for the children will not solve our problems.

A few years ago, before the Connecticut State Teachers' Association, President Eliot said that compared with what was hoped would result from the establishment of the common school, this most important of all our institutions is a failure, and he gave a catalogue of some ten of the common evils of our time which the public school fails to right. These evils may be grouped under three heads: misgovernment in place of public efficiency, dissipation and idling in place of constructive use of leisure in recreation, cleavage and class feeling in place of social order and public spirit.

This is a very serious charge, for the distinctive success or failure of America lies in our efficiency or bungling of collective self-service through political machinery, our waste or good use of leisure, our capacity

to weld a harmonious whole out of the varied elements of our population and so to produce a race of socially conscious men and women, the maxim of whose choices shall be the common good.

The fault is not in the character of the service for which the neighborhood building and ground is now used. The fault is simply in the fact that at present it is used to coördinate the social life of only a third of the population of the community, and that the evils of which Dr. Eliot speaks are those which come through the failure of the citizenship to use this building as the common political headquarters, and their failure to bring about its equipment and use as the common recreation center of the community for the young men and women between school age and maturity.

The public school as simply an education center for the child does not and cannot produce good citizenship, for in its nature it is and must be a monarchy, a place of training in obedience. We may veil and soften the authority into the most careful fostering guidance, as Froebel did and as Madame Montessori does, but the authority must reside in the person over the scholars, and the law of the school must be obedience. Good citizenship is more than obedience. Good citizenship in a democracy is the consciousness and the practice not only of responsibility for obeying the government, but for participation in being the government.

Does the public school system as it is now used tend powerfully toward the development of temptation-resisting power, toward the supplanting of vice and dissipation and the capacity to freely devote surplus energy to beautiful expression? The use of the schoolhouse as simply the formal education center for the child does not and cannot meet this need, because in its na-

ture it is restrictive. The child in the school is not free to do wrong. Attendance is compulsory. There is practically no training in spontaneous expression.

And, finally, does or can the use of this neighborhood building, simply as an education place for children, develop that social consciousness, that breadth of sympathy, that sense of human solidarity and power for collective action, upon which all those who do not accept the doctrine of the class *struggle* base their hope of human progress?

The public school is a socially supported institution but, in its use as simply an education place for children, it is individualistic in the tendency of its training. The main lines of conscious obligation and responsibility do not run horizontally from child to child, but perpendicularly from the teacher to each child. This is necessarily the case. As long as children are under a teacher, and as long as they are children they must be under a teacher, the chief feelings of the child are directed upward, whether they are love or fear or dislike, toward the teacher, rather than outward as social feeling. Moreover the whole spirit of child study is the consideration of each child as an individual and the main tendency of its training is to develop the child's powers and capacities, his self-reliance, and independence. And this is as it should be, for the period of independence is a necessary stage of the child's development. Only by this training at this period can the later consciousness of interdependence be strong and free. Its service in *social* training the schoolhouse can render only as it is made a fraternal meeting place of adults.

The public school has not failed so far as it is used. It has done and is doing its service to the community through the children. The citizens have failed to use

this neighborhood building as political headquarters and have failed to provide for its use as a civic training place for young men and young women in addition to its use as a formal education place for children.

With the one-third use to which it is now put, the influence of this institution is to breed that spirit of obedience which makes it easy for political and economic bosses to rule, and that spirit of reverence for things as they used to be when the teacher was young, which puts a drag on the progress of society and stifles spontaneity; and that spirit of self-centered individualism which has chopped us up into a thousand and one little groups mutually exclusive, separated, suspicious of each other, with no development of community feeling, social consciousness or democratic sense.

The fact is that to-day the public school building is to the community what the house would be to the family, if it were used only as a nursery for the children. This use alone would not make a home. The neighborhood institution one-third used is parental and individualistic in its influence, just as the household would be if it were used only as a place for children. For the family group the house is a home when it is, first of all, a place of democracy, of equal union, of free expression and group sense between adults; then a place of parental guidance of young children, restrained, and individualistic, then for those between these two, a place of training during the transition from childhood to maturity.

When the neighborhood building is used first as a common democratic association place for adults, and by them made the center wherein young people (out of school) may find opportunities of training for citizenship in the practice of self-government and for wholesome recreation, this institution in the center of the

neighborhood becomes in its influence for the neighborhood group what the home is for the family group, each, of course, with its special functions, the one based upon the primary sex relation, the other based upon the common interests of neighbors, but each including all of the people, old, middle-aged and young, within its circle.

This then is the first matter of practical politics for a neighborhood organization of the adult citizenship to take up, the opening of the building, and the securing of the directing service which will make it a club house for the young men and for the young women of the community, and the securing of a combination gymnasium and assembly hall which will equip it for their recreation. Here is use of the building for at least three evenings in the week, one for adults, one for young men, and one for young women.

This is not enough, for there is one essential element left out, namely, the provision for general gathering, when, with the natural chaperonage of their fathers and mothers and the other older people of the community, the young men and young women may have opportunity for getting together for enjoyment of wholesome social activities.

There is no problem of greater importance than that of supplying youth a chance to become acquainted and to associate in a wholesome environment; for the character of the future home, the problem of divorce, the problem of prostitution are all tied up in the question as to the sort of opportunity which young men and young women have for decent clean recreation together.

Of the first thousand girls committed to Bedford Reformatory, the majority said they took their first downward step through commercial dance hall associations. In his study of the causes of prostitution, Dr.



J. P. Warbasse says of the causes that operate upon the males: "The absence of good feminine society in the circles of youth is a factor. Social contact with high minded women satisfies the craving for feminine society and deters young men from seeking the society of the opposite type of women. A boy who has friendships among good women is apt to be áshamed to go to the lewd."

To say that this problem is to be answered by making the unit home attractive is to ignore the great fact that between fifteen and twenty-one the natural instinct of both boys and girls is to go out from the home, seeking each other's company. Where shall they find and become acquainted with each other? This is no problem of a particular part of the country. It is not only a city problem. It is fundamental and common everywhere. The citizens in any neighborhood, coöperating with those of other neighborhoods, will later grapple with and find the answer to the problems of international relationship, but when they aid in developing the right ground upon which the nations may get together, they will have done nothing more important, nothing greater than when they have brought it about that the young men and young women of their own community may get together in wholesome social intercourse.

In Chicago, not long since, the social starvation of the young women there was set forth in the proposal that there be formed "lonely girls' clubs." It is on account of the splendid courage of young women that society does not suffer more, from the failure to provide in every neighborhood a place of wholesome social gathering. Where this normal wholesome desire for social enjoyments is not expressed in unwholesome

ways, society suffers both from the results of mismating due to the fact that young men and young women have no opportunity for wide acquaintanceship before betrothal and by the loss of that natural springtime joy in life which comes into any community when young men and women find wholesome association.

Not in the city only are young men and young women lonely. Here is a letter from a country girl that was read at the Southwestern Social Center Conference last February. It says something which ought to be of interest to those who are taking up the cry "back to the farm," for it tells the secret of the lure of the city to both country girls and boys who do not realize that congestion of population is not social life:

May I just tell you how my neighbor girls and I live? Our day begins at four o'clock A.M. Supper is never served before eight o'clock; the work is done by nine; then we have time to read, if we are not too tired. More than once I have known girls to sleep on the floor because they were too tired to prepare for bed. Aside from the housework, I have been called upon many times to help with the outdoor work. This is not uncommon, and we count it no hardship to work in the fields, even though the sun is hot. We usually like the change, but the work is so heavy that we should not do it.

But the work is not the worst; there is nothing to think about, nothing to which to go. Suppose we go to town. When our business is transacted we must stand around the stores or on the streets, sometimes to have the town folks make fun of our funny clothes, until the men get ready to go home.

Among the girls with whom I went to school were five who belonged to one family; they are splendid girls, as good as any I have ever known. These girls have been obliged to stop going to school when twelve years of age, and settle

down to a life of drudgery. They haven't life. In the family of their next-door neighbor three daughters died from consumption. One girl walked three or four miles through deep snow to attend a party.

How can we expect girls to stay in the country when there is absolutely nothing to do but work or get married? One of my schoolmates was married at sixteen and divorced before she was eighteen years old; another married at fourteen. My father asked a neighbor boy what papers they read at his home. He said: "We don't read any; we have no time during the day, and we can't waste the coal-oil at night."

The question of social gatherings is really a question of social and intellectual life and death to us who are country girls.

What is the sort of activity which young men and women crave in their association? Musical expression together, dramatic expression together, but more than either, dancing, which combines both musical and dramatic expression and which is, more than any other, the natural and normal recreation for the association of young men and young women.

When one observes that the repression of the desire to dance on the part of young people, especially in the country and in small towns, leads to the expression of the normal and wholesome impulse in silly clandestine and often sexually harmful kissing games, one is tempted to denounce the stupid, distorted puritanism of the men and women who make it necessary for young people to go to unwholesome places in order to dance. There is reason, however, for objection to dancing among young people as usually practiced. Dancing is a social confection. It is like pie, or cake or ice-cream. If the whole meal is made up of pastry, it is weakening and harmful. But as a dessert at the end of a substantial

meal, it is not unwholesome. If young people gather for an evening and do nothing but dance, it is dissipation. Suppose, however, that the program of the evening begins with a half hour's good orchestral and choral music, and then for forty minutes there is given a thought inspiring lecture; and suppose that the gathering is made up not only of the young people, but of their fathers and mothers and the older people of the community. Then, if the program closes with an hour's dancing, instead of being harmful, dancing becomes as fine as that in a home; for, indeed the broadened spirit of home, the fine clean human spirit of neighborhood is there.

A suggestion of what this opening of the schoolhouse for the young men and boys of the neighborhood means is given in the words of a merchant whose place of business is near the first schoolhouse to be fully equipped and opened as a social center in Rochester. He stopped the neighborhood civic secretary on the street one day to say:

"The social center has accomplished what I had regarded as impossible. I have been here nine years and during that time there has always been a gang of toughs around these corners which has been a continual nuisance. This winter that gang has disappeared."

"They aren't a gang any more," answered the neighborhood secretary.

The value of this club association for young fellows in the same building that is used as a citizens' common council headquarters, in calling out the splendid best that is in them and tending to train for civic self-respect, is suggested in an incident that occurred about a month after one of the schoolhouses was opened for the use of the young men and older boys of the neighbor-

hood. A plaster statue that stood in one of the halls was maliciously injured. When the club heard of it, they appointed a house committee to watch out for further vandalism. The culprit was not discovered. But the club assessed itself eleven dollars and raised the money to replace the statue. There was no other injury to the property in any social center. One Sunday afternoon (after the first year the centers in Rochester were opened on Sunday on the recommendation of the ministers' association of that city) occurred this incident:

The general civic secretary dropped in about the middle of the afternoon. When he entered, not seeing the boys about, he asked the guide at the door where they were.

"They're holding a meeting in the art room," he answered.

"Who is with them?" asked the secretary.

"Nobody," was the response.

"Don't you know that they shouldn't be in that room without a club director present?"

"I have been listening from the hall and they seem to be orderly."

The secretary went to the art room, and, opening the door, found some forty young fellows, ranging about seventeen or eighteen years of age, sitting in order, the president in his chair, the secretary beside him, keeping the minutes of the meeting, and one of the youths on his feet presenting the claims of the Democratic candidate for the presidency. The guest sat down to listen to the debate. After the speaker had used his allotted time the floor was given to a rival claimant, and so an orderly triangular debate was carried through. When it was over, it was learned that a dispute had been started in the hall over the relative merits of the sev-

eral candidates. A year before, if these fellows had been interested at all in such a question, a dispute would have led to loud contradictions, possibly blows. In the midst of the discussion in the hall it was suggested that in order to give everybody a fair show they should hold a formal debate. None of these fellows was a school boy, and some of them were of the "naturally agin' the government" type.

The most significant effect of the organization of the young women and girls and their use of the center as a civic club house was the deepening of their interest in life, which shifted their chief attention from superficial personal adornment to more important things. This came partly from their physical training and partly from the development of a sincere natural acquaintance with the young men of the neighborhood. It was expressed in this bit of doggerel which one of the girls' clubs produced:

We girls who used to pose in front  
Of mirrors half the day,  
Now have the roses in our cheeks—  
Our powder's thrown away.  
We know that brains are more than hats,  
That heads are more than hair.  
We're here because we mean to be  
Useful as well as fair.

As in the household, the adult members have their special counselings, so in the social center the adult citizens have their special evening when the serious business of democracy is considered; as the boys in a household have their own room or rooms, so the "Coming Civic Club" of the neighborhood has its own evening; as the girls in a household have their own rooms, so in the neighborhood use of the schoolhouse they have their time

of exclusive use of the building. The general evening is the gathering of the whole community group, as the family gathers in the household, all together, for such fine enjoyments as are common to the whole group. This is the heart and hearth of the neighborhood. It is in this communal gathering of the whole neighborhood family, with music at the opening, and then a lecture or entertainment, supplemented, perhaps, by motion pictures, followed by an hour's wholesome intercourse, usually with dancing or other form of free enjoyment, that the living, creative communal spirit, the spirit that sings, is released.

Of such a general evening, a visitor at a center said: "In the room were gathered the fathers, the mothers, the grand-fathers, the grand-mothers, the young men and the young women, and, oh, it was good to see. I stepped up beside the wheel chair of an old Hollander. He was a paralytic, but his heart beat high, and his quavering old voice was sweet with the hope of youth, and he, too, sang. No one could look upon that scene and not feel a better man, a better woman. We had half an hour of song and a half hour of talk, and then we had some dancing and I saw the finest thing I have seen in years; the fathers danced with their daughters, the mothers grown young again danced with their sons. Weren't they happy? Indeed, they were. I saw a vision of the future, a vision with a promise. No one could come there and not be thrilled to higher endeavor, finer, stronger, and better effort, purer service and more fraternal love."

This spirit does not find itself merely by the gathering of neighbors together, without having back of it such waking of democracy as comes through the serious discussion of public questions by the adults, meeting to-



gether, and such training in self-government as comes through the young men's meeting by themselves and the young women's meeting by themselves, each group on its own evening. It is when these parts of the community group have found, each its common interest, and then these parts are brought together that the air is clarified, and the common feeling of the neighborhood is born.

Col. R. E. Smith is a very practical farmer of Sherman, Texas. Like most men in our commercial economically-unadjusted time, he has been forced to measure values in terms of material things. Things of the spirit are worthy or not in proportion as they register in wealth increase. He said, in speaking of the social center, and especially of the general evening gathering:

"I will be candid with you, that I paid little attention to the social center idea when I first heard of it, but I want to say that my ideas of farming have almost been revolutionized, transformed. It seems entirely different now. Perhaps the fact that I have taken more interest in my neighbors, become acquainted with them on the common ground of the social center, makes me like them better, makes them like me better, and consequently makes us both do better; anyhow things are in a more prosperous condition now than ever before. This movement will do good in many ways. People get together, causing them to understand each other, and the young people are fired with ambition, and if this goes on—better corn will be raised over Texas than there ever was before."

But there is a more important standard of values in this country to-day than even that of economic efficiency—it is the standard of democratic efficiency, for in the development of political capacity lies the hope of intelligently solving the great problems of economic and social

adjustment, and this is the effect of which Governor Wilson speaks, the effect of so bringing the parts of the community together that there may be expressed the *common impulse*.

“There is no sovereignty of the people if the several sections of the people be at loggerheads with one another. Sovereignty comes with coöperation; sovereignty comes with the quick pulses of sympathy, sovereignty comes by common impulse.”

Here then is the first matter to be taken up by any neighborhood organization of the citizenship, the “unfinished business” of establishing the use of this neighborhood house as a club for young men, and for young women, and as a common place of social gathering for the whole community. And this, not only because of the need of the young people, and not only because in this way is laid the foundation for the practical answer to the question: How and where shall we develop the folk art, the folk music, the folk drama of America? With this organization is established the foundation rock of democratic sense, the clarity of vision and the *power* without which democracy is impossible.

When the neighboring citizens have established this basis of the complete social center, then the gathering there of coöperation in health and dental, cultural and informational service, and the centering there of community enterprises of all kinds are sure to come as the expressions of the unified life and thought and will of the community. Here is the realization of practical politics within the neighborhood, without which politics in the wider reach of the city, the state, the nation cannot be practical; for without this basis, in which the separated pebbles and sand grains are cemented together in common feeling, democracy has no firm understanding.

## CHAPTER VII

### WHAT WE HAVE—WHAT WE WANT

“What is the debt of your city?”

“Is there a legal limit to the bonded debt, and has it been reached?”

“Do you remember the tax rate?”

“What is the total valuation, or assessment for tax purposes?”

“Do you know what the basis of the assessment is?”

These are the questions which J. Horace McFarland, President of the American Civic Association, asked of citizens in various parts of the country. He makes the fact that he nowhere received satisfactory answers to these questions the theme of an article, which appeared some time ago in the *Outlook*,\* entitled “The Ignorance of ‘Good’ Citizens.”

In these questions is expressed the attitude of the men who would have citizens regard their membership in the city as stockholdership in a business enterprise. If citizenship is that, then the important “*primary* facts” (Mr. McFarland italicises the word) for one to know about his city, are the financial facts. If the city is simply a business corporation, and citizenship is simply stockholdership, then why should the citizens, the stockholders, interfere with their officials, the directors in running the business?

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\* January 3, 1906.

The general ignorance regarding these financial matters signifies that the average citizen does not regard his membership in the city as mere stockholdership in a business corporation.

What does the average citizen know about his city?

He knows the population. Mr. McFarland says, "I never knew one to fail on the population!" and he says it with a disdainful exclamation point, as though this knowledge were unimportant, and the citizen's possession of this knowledge were without significance.

This fact that, while practically nobody can tell "the total valuation or assessment for tax purposes," practically every citizen can tell the population of his town is of the greatest significance, for it indicates that the interest of the citizen is naturally, primarily and continually—not financial or business, but *human interest*. It indicates something more and deeper than that. It shows that we are involuntarily, unconsciously, but surely reaching out with the feeling that the city is more than a financial corporation, that it has the character of a larger family group. For this pride in numbers is not confined to the men who own real estate, or whose interest may be accounted for on other commercial grounds; it is common to the man who has nothing to gain by increased population; and it is the same feeling which the primitive man, the Abraham, the Isaac, the Lot, of every race had in regarding it as a blessing to have a great household.

The whole publicity-of-accounts hope of "good government" has been built up on this theory that the city or the state is merely a financial corporation; and the practically universal ignoring of the city treasurer's report by the average citizen is the declaration that this theory will not do. Finding that citizens do not grasp

the significance of fiscal statements, and, for the most part, do not read them, when submitted in pamphlets or in dry formal lists of figures in the daily press, there has begun the city budget exhibit method, first used by the Bureau of Municipal Research in New York City. There in 1908, twenty-five thousand dollars of public money was spent in attempting to set forth in a popular and sensational way the city treasurer's report. A good many people came and admired the ingenuity by which Dr. William H. Allen and his staff had attempted to make poetry and pictures out of a financial statement. The city refused, however, to become deeply excited or stirred or inspired. "It is a splendid way of bringing home to *taxpayers* the knowledge of what their money buys," said the mayor of another city on visiting the first New York Budget Exhibit; and in this comment he stated the necessary limitation of this method of making the city known to the citizen by talking merely in terms of dollars and cents. It is an appeal to the citizen in his capacity of "taxpayer," that is, on his dried-up, uninterested and splendidly unresponsive side. The city is more than finance, and the citizen is very much more than a taxpayer.

The leaders in the movement for the city's self realization are beginning to recognize that the vision is not to be brought down to earth by appealing simply to the financial interest of citizens as merely taxpayers. Practical students are moving on to another conception.

At the First National Conference on Social Center Development, George E. Hooker of Chicago expressed this more practical, because more human, understanding of the problem. He spoke in terms of the large city, but what he said applies, so far as it goes, to the problem of the small town and rural community.

He said:

Fifteen or twenty years ago some of us who were then actively attacking the housing problem, struggling with franchise questions, bemoaning the architectural ugliness, or trying to remedy the lack of wholesome recreational opportunities in the cities, were separately seeing only unsatisfactory conditions, and scarcely one of us was finding anything that was promising. Then there came into the air the phrase "city planning," and it seemed like the clearing of a clouded sky. The idea which that phrase fastened upon the mind was that cities could be planned as well as buildings. And to-day any self-respecting city in this country has on its front counter a book of greater or less size, well illustrated with one or two colored maps setting forth proposals for its general physical improvement. We are going to do a great deal in that line in the next quarter of a century. We have done considerable studying and some execution. If Germany, if Sweden, if England, if Australia, if Japan, if South America can build cities in an original, economic, sanitary, beautiful manner, we can, and, of course, we are going to. For we have just as large resources, and, indeed, somewhat more than any of them. We have all the facilities and resources of modern science, and we are going to remove some of the legal obstacles so that we will get freedom for constructive action. We will go ahead.

Then the question is, What kind of cities are we going to have? We may have a city whose physical framework has been dominated by military accident or intention, as the long streets of Paris mark the location of her historic walls, and her boulevards are laid out so as to make it possible for cannon to command long stretches. We may have a city that is more or less a show town, that puts up a brave front for visitors, with fine avenues, well façaded, well flowered, as are the streets of the capital of the German empire, but with eighty per cent. of the population living in small flats in the rear, opening upon areas dark and

clammy, and facing similar flats across the way; or a city which is addressed to the artistic feeling, like Munich; or a city whose physical framework has been dominated by railway interests, like Chicago; or a city that has been largely directed by commercial and landlord interests, like New York.

What kind of city are we going to have?

The city that is in the minds of all of us when we bring the question down to our deep, real desire, to our real aspiration, is a people's city, not a city which has some particular architectural expression, but simply a city in which no class, no group, no part, shall have been overlooked, a city that shall not be dominated in the interests of one section of the community.

Mr. Hooker then expressed the value of citizenship-organization and social center development as a means to the realization of this ideal.

How shall we develop that kind of a city, a people's city? How shall *we* find out what the *people* need and what *they* want? We shall find out by means of the social center. Without this practical method by which the people can be concentrated, consolidated, by which *they* can express themselves and formulate *their* judgment and enforce *their* will, it is impossible to know what a people's city is, or to plan a people's city or to build a people's city. With the social center as a means of concerting opinion, as a means of expression, as a means of conference, we can find out and we can adopt methods and we can attain the result of a people's city.

This is more practical. When citizens are recognized as "people," and not merely as "taxpayers," progress is being made. While this view point of Mr. Hooker's is much more nearly true than that which Mr. McFarland and Dr. Allen express, it is still impractical. The "peo-



ple's city" is more interesting than the "taxpayers' city," but there is a very real difficulty in this conception of the "people's" city, as Mr. Hooker expresses it, and this conception is far from that which is essential and inherent in the social center idea. As we use the term "people" we always mean a class, which excludes. Not only is this true when we qualify the term by the adjective "plain," which excludes those who are good looking; but it is always true. When we refer to "the people" we do not mean to include ourselves. We use the third person. Notice that Mr. Hooker does this. "*We* shall find out what *they* (the people) want."

Now, the "people" in this sense in which Mr. Hooker uses the term can never realize anything in city planning, nor in any other creative expression. For it is always a changing aggregate, shifting with each individual. "The people" is always the other persons, those who are not "we." The difficulty is that when for instance the city planners set themselves apart from the "all of us" and wait for the rest of us to plan, it is as though the part of the brain of an individual which is especially capable of planning were to separate itself from the rest and say, "when the rest formulates a plan, then we will know what the rest wants." It is as though the eyes were to set themselves off from the rest of the body and say, "the thing we want to look at is that which the rest of the body enjoys looking at." It is only when the specialized part of the individual brain functions as one with and a part of the whole brain that thought is possible for the individual. It is only as the eyes act as a part of the individual that sight is possible. The whole person thinks with the specialized parts not away from, but *of* the brain. The whole person sees through the eyes.

The whole city is capable of planning, as the parts of it which are specialized in capacity for planning act with and in the whole. The term which Mr. Hooker should have used was not "the people"; for this does not include Mr. Hooker, and he must be included. The term, perhaps, he should have used is "folk" or "folks"; for this, as spoken by the individual, does not exclude, but includes, himself. It is not "the people" but "we folks" who find creative expression, whether in music, or drama, or in other arts. Folk songs, folk drama, folk dancing—these are the expression of the spirit which says "we," not "they." A city's, a town's, a nation's expression can never be characteristic, genuine, original, and so, true, except as it becomes "folk" expression, except as the élite each of us identifies himself with the great common all of us.

This is the spirit for which the social center furnishes the means of expression. The social center makes it possible to use always, in regard to public matters, the first person plural, instead of the first person singular on the one hand and the third person plural on the other. It is not "I" and "they"; it is "we." It is not "mine" and "theirs"; it is "ours." This is the spirit of practical politics in a democracy.

Aside from the intrinsic great importance of supplying the young people of the neighborhood with wholesome opportunity for association and recreation, and the inherent benefit to be derived from establishing a general evening for common all-inclusive assembling, which shall serve as a melting pot, not only to burn out the false and the useless in the latest comers, but to burn out the dross in those of us who came, or whose ancestors came, from various parts of the world on earlier boats, and so to produce unadulterated men and

women, this program has the greatest value in putting into practise the all-inclusive "our" in thinking of and striving for a public project. The opening of the schoolhouse and the securing of the necessary supervision for its use as the club house of the young people, and the gathering place of the whole community, should be regarded as the "unfinished business" of the citizenship organization, because this action visualizes in a very practical way the community of interest within the neighborhood, a community of membership centering in a community of ownership. And so it gives a standing ground for the creative "folk" spirit, the sense of "we" and "ours," and a starting point from which this attitude toward municipal and state and national problems may broaden.

Of course, if citizens develop neighborhood spirit, and stop there, it is only a little less bad than if they limit their sense of fellowship and common interest at the boundary of the family group. In its very nature, this program of fully developing the neighborhood institution forbids the expression merely of the ingrowing neighborhood spirit, which is just a two sizes larger selfishness. For it necessitates coöperation with other neighborhoods. To be sure, in some parts of the country, in some rural communities and in a very few towns, the single school district is autonomous, but even where this is the case the local organization of the electorate cannot develop its social center fully, without the coöperation of other neighborhoods in securing worthy programs, it cannot have motion picture films, for instance, except through commercial agencies, unless there is a supply available for other communities. And in the arrangement of game schedules for the young people, and of a system of visitings, for debate, et cetera, the single neighbor-

hood organization cannot really live if it tries to live only within itself.

In the cities, and in the average town and rural county, the individual neighborhood organization cannot gain for itself any opening or equipment of the building, nor any securing of supervision except by obtaining equal opportunity for all of the other neighborhoods in the city or rural county to fully use their neighborhood buildings. That is to say, if the citizens of any district decide that they want their building equipped with gymnasium and baths, and supplied with lectures and entertainments, then they must at once, in order to achieve this neighborhood benefit, enter the sphere of municipal politics, and unite with other organizations in bringing about the common benefit to the whole city.

It may be that the school board is of the type which Rochester had when social center development began in that city; that is, a committee of the citizenship, which recognizes the right of the citizens to have their property put to larger beneficial uses and which also has in hand funds for this purpose. The Rochester school board adopted and published a set of rules by which, not only might the citizens in any neighborhood use their school building as a neighborhood civic club house for adults; but, upon the request of the citizens' organization in any neighborhood, the building might be opened for use of the young people, the young men and young women on separate evenings, with proper equipment and supervision, and for use as a branch public library, a lecture and entertainment center, et cetera.

It may be, as in the case of Milwaukee, that the school board is favorable to this project, but has no funds for more than the use by adults for discussion meetings. In this case, the necessity is, of course, in order to secure

the further systematic use of the buildings, to have an appropriation made. In Milwaukee that was the situation, and the people were given an opportunity to vote upon and to endorse, as they did, the investment of eighty-eight thousand dollars in this enterprise.

It may be, however, as was the case in Denver, that the school board recognizes no rights on the part of the citizens to the wider use of their property, or to say anything about its being opened for the use of the young men or young women, or for recreational or other purposes. If this is the situation, then there is no possible means by which the citizens may more quickly and vividly "see the cat" than to have their school board refuse them the full use of these neighborhood buildings. In the *Rocky Mountain News*, of December 3, 1911, in a signed editorial, George Creel said: "The thing is bound to come, as a matter of course, for it is part and parcel of democracy. Nothing can stop it. Denver can take its choice between getting in with the vanguard, or trailing along in the rear. As for the school board, let this word be said to them in all kindness: If they will grant the request of the people, realizing that mere election did not vest ownership of the buildings in them, the social center idea will come in peace and utmost good will. But let them take the attitude that the people must not be allowed to use their own buildings for purposes of meeting and discussion, the social center idea will come with the sweep of a storm, and all the blotters in the world will be needed to gather up their political remains." The next spring came the turnover in Denver. To be sure, this municipal house cleaning was not due alone to the refusal of the school board to allow the school buildings

to be fully used, but when the president of the board said, regarding the request of the citizens, that "the people in the city hall" do not like this idea and that therefore the request should not be granted, it helped very materially to reveal clearly the allegiance of "the people in the city hall."

Supposing that the neighborhood organization of the citizens has taken up and acted upon the matter of providing for the full use of its community building; it is now ready to give its attention to the wider problems of city, state and nation, for whose solution its members share the final responsibility. If the organization is formed at the time of a "campaign," it is in order that invitations be given to have the claims of the various candidates presented before it.

Congressman Perkins, in opening such a pre-election series on "Why Vote for Taft?", "Why Vote for Bryan?", "Why Vote for Debs?", "Why Vote for Cha-fin?" before the first neighborhood organization formed in Rochester, four years ago, said: "This is a most practical method of preparing for the intelligent selection of a president." Obviously, in the consideration of the qualifications of men for the presidency it is not feasible for each neighborhood club to have each of the various candidates appear before it in person; but it is possible to have advocates of each present his claims, and it is feasible to have each candidate speak, upon the invitation and under the auspices of the city or town league or federation of neighborhood clubs, assembled in general meeting. The same is true, of course, of candidates for state office.

In the case of applicants for municipal or local positions, however, it is feasible to have each candidate appear in person to tell why he thinks he should be



chosen, and to answer questions. William Beard, in opening the program in which each of the candidates for alderman of the ward presented his claims before a newly formed civic club in Rochester, said: "I understand that we are here for a three-fold purpose; first, that the voters may see what sort of men we are who are seeking office; second, that we may tell what has been the history of our relation to the ward we seek to represent; third, that we may tell what we mean to do if elected."

In the meeting of one of the neighborhood organizations in Madison, Wisconsin, which began its usefulness by inviting the several candidates for mayor to speak before it, one of them said: "Even if I should not be elected, I shall be glad I ran, since my candidacy has given me this opportunity to talk before an audience free from partisan bias, to tell how I think our municipal affairs should be conducted, to hear the ideas of others and to hear what others think of my ideas, and so to become acquainted with my fellow citizens in this town."

If there are not only candidacies to be voted on at the approaching election, but amendments, bond issues, or other specific propositions, these should of course be made the topics of meetings in which the arguments for and against each are presented by the best proponents and opponents securable, and thus laid open for intelligent discussion by the citizens. At the meeting in which the movement for citizenship-organization and social center development was inaugurated in the city of Racine, Mayor Goodland said: "This project seems to me altogether good; but when I think of the specific bond issue that is soon to be decided on, this proposed organization seems not only good, but immediately nec-



essary, for in no other way can that question receive the unbiased consideration its importance merits."

If the citizens' organization is formed soon after an election, then it is a good plan to offer an early opportunity for newly elected officials to meet the citizens and to set forth the programs which they mean to carry out. As a rule, the official of whatever rank, welcomes such opportunity. One mayor said on such an occasion: "This gives me a chance to find out whether you people are going to be behind me in what I am to do, or whether I am headed for trouble." Obviously, having state and national officers appear before the citizens to explain their programs is not so easily feasible as in the case of local officers, but where it is convenient for these agents of the citizens to consult their principals before they enter upon new sessions of legislature or congress, such meetings prove beneficial both to the delegate and to the citizens.

If there is no special business of this kind to be taken up, then, however it may be worded, the intelligent program is such a series as that which the typical neighborhood civic club in Rochester arranged, under the general topic, "What we have and what we want."

In order to secure the advantages of orderly arrangement and sequence, it is desirable to plan a series of programs, just as it is necessary for an individual or a group, starting out upon a journey, to have an itinerary. To be sure, this arrangement should be so flexible, as always to allow for change as the season advances, or for interruption for the consideration of special questions as they arise.

"What we have and what we want." This is always the logical sequence for the consideration of public questions, although it is not the usual order in which

interest is developed in public questions. As a rule, "what we have" is noticed and interesting only when the possible "what we want" suggested by what some other community has, has been noticed. The perpetual idealist always sees things as they are as wrong and improvable, the jagged, irregular outlines of the real always stand out clearly in silhouette against the light of the ideal. He is never indifferent, because he sees always a difference, a contrast. For the average man, however, the "shades of the prison house" of custom so dim the vision that he loses the disturbing sense of contrast between things as they are and as they might be. He is indifferent because he sees no difference. He does not notice, let us say, the club in the belt or the hand of the patrolman on the street; but suppose that he visits Toledo and has his attention called to the fact that these men who are "hired not to hurt but to help" are equipped with personality and intelligence instead of clubs. When he goes back to his home town, he notices the clubs his home town policemen carry.

While interest is most frequently awakened in the old, by first seeing the new, the consideration of the desirability of change should usually give precedence to the presentation of things as they are and the defense of the existing condition. It was this plan, that the neighborhood association in Rochester which first arranged such a "what we have and what we want" series, found successful.

For instance, in considering the desirability of changing to the commission form of city government, one of the aldermen was first invited to tell the duties of an alderman and to give the arguments for the existing method. In considering the street railway service, the man who was invited to speak first was the representa-

tive of the corporation, who happened to be the general superintendent of the city-lines. In a forty-minute address he set forth the facts about and the advantages of "what we have." The address that followed on "what we want" was given by a man who had recently returned from an extended investigation of the street railway service abroad and who believed that improvements might be made in the Rochester method. Following these two addresses, there was the period of general discussion, in which the corporation counsel was invited to participate and to advise on the legal aspects of the matter. In the same way, such a topic as "Working conditions of women and girls in department stores" was taken up, the head of one of the large department stores in the city being invited to tell "what we have," a labor conditions investigator following with a presentation of "what we want." In the same way, the present and the possible newspaper service was set forth. Similarly, Rochester's housing conditions, the use of the Genesee water power, the method of taxation, the treatment of immigrants, the public school service, and so on, were taken up.

Such a series of programs, treating of specific matters, giving opportunity first for the presentation and defense of the existing condition, then for the presentation of the advantage of a possible change or acquisition, is sure not only to hold the interest of a community organization, but to prove constructive. Such discussion has the essential drawing power of a contest in which the instinct for fair play is satisfied. Real differences are expressed, but the audience being made up largely of those who have not previously taken sides, the spirit of the meetings is always sure to tend toward a constructive program. It is never the arrangement of

debate, merely for the sake of debate. This may be, and often is, valuable in the organization of boys and girls, but it is worthless and indeed harmful in the gatherings of adult citizens, for it tends to develop partition and division which does not tend to eventuate in agreement and in action.

Several things should be noted about this method of arranging the programs of a neighborhood civic organization. This method always means the taking up of specific propositions, rather than disputing over large theories of political economy. The theory of the single taxer or the socialist or the high tariff man has opportunity of expression, but always in terms of specific things to be done.

It means the consideration of *practical* questions, that is problems, whose solutions may be translated into action.

It recognizes that the citizenship is responsible, not only for the administration of that part of its business which is public in its ownership, but also for that which, while it is private in ownership, is public in its service; that is, "what we have and what we want in newspaper service" is considered in just the same way as "What we have and what we want in public school service," it being recognized that, so far as its service is concerned, the newspaper is a public educational institution as much as is the school system, and that the final responsibility for its condition is upon the citizenship as much as is the final responsibility for the condition of the schools.

This same general method applies equally to the consideration of the citizens' business in state and national spheres. Indeed, the taking up of problems of the municipality almost always leads to the consideration

of state and national questions. For instance, if the citizens in the average town, having discussed the question of establishing a municipal lighting plant or of changing the form of the machinery of administration of their municipal affairs, have decided that they want to establish a lighting plant, or to adopt the commission form, then, as a rule, they have the occasion for inviting their representatives in the state legislature to come and explain the advantage of the existing policy and laws of the state, and to learn what changes the citizens desire in the state legislation in order to empower them to do these things in the city. Or suppose the questions taken up are such as the high cost of living, or any of the divisions of this complex and pressing problem. To be sure, the neighborhood organization may establish a coöperative creamery or factory or store, but in order to intelligently and completely discuss this sort of question, it is absolutely necessary to move into the national sphere, and, following out the same plan, to invite the national representatives to defend the existing national policy, and in turn to learn what the people want. Obviously, as compared with the mere gathering to protest against bad conditions, this method of giving subcommittee members the opportunity to explain what they are doing, and to tell what they propose to do about specific matters of common interest which the citizens have put into their hands to administer, is much more sure of practical result.

There is one very important aspect of this citizenship-organization for "what we have and what we want" discussion, which should be mentioned. It is illustrated in such a question as that of insect and fungus pests. Suppose a neighborhood is visited by some such pest as the chestnut blight, which brought in on uninspected

Japanese chestnut grafts has destroyed practically every chestnut tree east of the Hudson River, or the brown tail moth which comes from France and Germany, or the San Jose scale which came from China.

In order to intelligently consider this question, the neighborhood organization will send to the department of agriculture at Washington. There it will learn that this is the only civilized country in the world which has no adequate plant quarantine. Here is a question to be taken up with the senatorial and congressional representatives. Why, in view of the fact that the foreign insect and fungus pests have not all reached here yet, that, for instance, the potato wart disease, starting from Hungary, has reached Newfoundland, and is likely to be brought in at any time in shipments of potatoes, have we not a plant quarantine? The representative may explain that the reason is of the same character as the objections to the parcels post, which John Wanamaker named as the private express companies; that is, he may explain that the reason we have not a plant quarantine is because of the private lobby of nursery men. The practical outcome of such a discussion is the suggestion that, if the representative puts the interests of the nursery men before the interests of the citizens who sent him to Washington, then they made a mistake in sending him.

The establishment of a plant quarantine, however, is not the full solution. That will help keep out these undesirable immigrants in the future, but a lot of them are here now—the boll-weevil from Mexico, the European leopard moth, and the rest. How shall we be rid of these? Here is a question within the sphere of state action, the protection of the birds that they may help in the fight. For the consideration of this phase of the question, it is desirable to invite the citizens' representa-



tive in the state legislature, to come and tell "what we have" in state legislation on this subject, and to hear from the citizens "what we want."

Here is illustrated the great advantage of unity of control on the part of the citizens, of the business of both state and national character, which will prevent the development of that sphere of irresponsibility which is inevitable when the citizens depend upon the courts or any other subcommittees to have the final "say" upon their business. On August 10, 1911, Mr. Roosevelt said before the Colorado Legislature: "Unfortunately the courts, instead of leading in the recognition of the new conditions, have lagged behind, and, as each case has presented itself, have tended by a series of negative decisions to create a sphere in which neither nation nor state has effective control, and where the great business interests, that can call to their aid the ability of the greatest corporation lawyers, escape all control whatever." This whole matter of filling in the gap between state and national spheres of action and securing harmony and close correlation between them, which comes into every general problem, large or small, and which Mr. Roosevelt says is not achieved by the courts, is obviously secured when the citizenship assumes control, for this body is made up of those who are at the same time the authority in both national and state spheres.

This matter of insect pest treatment is not finally settled, however, by either national or state action, nor by both. It demands also direct local action. The one contribution to the insect hosts of destruction of the world which America has produced is the Colorado beetle, familiarly known as the potato bug. This native originated on the eastern slope of the Rockies about forty years ago. Ten years since, he passed in the egg the German



quarantine and appeared in Prussia. At once the children were enlisted by the offer of cash prizes, in gathering all that had arrived, and then all the ground where potato bug eggs or young were supposed to be was drenched with kerosene and set on fire, and there are no more potato bugs in Germany.

In Germany efficiency is secured through the power to command unified action, vested in a monarch. In this country similar efficiency may be secured only through democratically unified action, such as is possible with the citizenship organized in one body. With the citizenship organized into one body, and with the young people so organized as to supplement the activities of the adult citizens, it will be possible, not only to secure the enactment of laws in the public interest, but where, as in the handling of this problem, direct action on the part of the citizens themselves is required, there is furnished the means of producing such concerted action as would eliminate, within one year, every insect pest in the country with the possible exception of the mosquito.

Some of the great national questions, such as the fortification or neutralization of the Panama Canal, the proper method of developing the merchant marine, the public ownership of telegraphs, telephones, railroads, et cetera, the problem of international social center development, that is, the increase of the functions of The Hague tribunal, which carries with it the question of reduction of armament, et cetera, seem to be wholly within the national sphere. These and all other questions will inevitably come to the consideration of the citizens, if they begin to take up consecutively the public problems, beginning in the sphere of neighborhood interests, and following out to the town or city, the county, the state, the nation, in the spirit of practical politics, in the spirit

which calmly and broadly, intelligently and fearlessly, studies "What We Have," to understand it, and decides upon "What We Want," to get it done.

See what this line may lead to.

At the 1909 meeting of the National Municipal League at Cincinnati, the experience of Rochester, New York, in social center development was presented. The man who reported the conference for C. P. Taft's Cincinnati *Times-Star* was Frank Parker Stockbridge. Becoming interested, Mr. Stockbridge went to Rochester to investigate this development. When he came, he demonstrated again the remarkable power of the social center to discover the human interest of even a newspaper reporter. This had been shown before when, in that city, a seasoned reporter from one of the papers who was assigned to cover a neighborhood civic club meeting, became so much interested in the discussion that he forgot that he was not a human being and a citizen, and participated in it. When the city editor heard of it, he said that such a thing was impossible; but when he asked the reporter about it, the reporter answered: "Sure I did, and if you had been there, you would have forgotten yourself, too." Mr. Stockbridge got the story he came for, but he got something more. He became interested as a citizen. And, when he returned to Cincinnati, he found his friend, Herbert Bigelow, interested in the social center idea, and together they started to bring about the coördination of one community.

Their plan was to open the public building for the public discussion of public questions, but they quickly found that the public servants who controlled these public buildings were not the public's servants, and distinctly did not want public affairs discussed publicly. The public library board refused to allow the use of the

auditoriums in the branch libraries for public discussions, and the school board likewise took a firm stand against this form of education.

Mr. Stockbridge's public advocacy of this obviously democratic right was so out of harmony with the spirit of the political methods then dominant that Mr. Stockbridge was forced to resign his position on the *Times-Star*.

The "Town Meeting Society," which Bigelow and Stockbridge had organized to promote the social center idea, did not abandon the field, but diverted its energies into the effort to bring about such a change of political conditions as would make it impossible for any future pretenders to suppress free speech in Cincinnati. They found that the obstacles to be overcome were in the very constitution of the state of Ohio, which, by requiring all cities to have uniform charters, made it impossible for the citizens of any municipality to accomplish any administrative reform without the consent of the representatives in the legislature of enough other cities to make a majority of the legislature. The solution appeared to them to be the simple one of revising the constitution of Ohio, and from the "Town Meeting Society" and its efforts to open the public schools of Cincinnati sprang the movement for a constitutional convention, which was held in 1912, with Herbert Bigelow as president, and which submitted to the voters of Ohio, in September, 1912, forty-two amendments to the state constitution, the net result of which was to give Ohio the broadest and most progressive fundamental law of any of the states, and to give every municipality in the state absolute self-government in all matters pertaining to the local affairs of its citizens.

Mr. Stockbridge entered the magazine field when Gov-

ernor Wilson's acquaintances started his boom for the democratic nomination for the presidency. Mr. Stockbridge was selected as the best man in the country to organize Governor Wilson's preliminary publicity campaign. When Governor Wilson took his first western trip he was accompanied by Mr. Stockbridge. Arriving at Minneapolis, Governor Wilson was met by the writer who invited him to speak at the First National Conference on Social Center Development, to be held under the auspices of the Extension Division of the University of Wisconsin. His acceptance of this invitation was in part due to the fact that he had learned of the social center plan and method from Mr. Stockbridge.

This is not the end of the story. But it is enough to illustrate the character of this practical method of approach to the administration of public business of which Governor Wilson spoke at that national conference.

"The interesting thing about this movement is that a great many things have occurred to people to do in the schoolhouse, things social, things educational, things political—for one of the reasons why politics took on a new complexion in the city in which this movement originated was that the people who could go into the schoolhouses at night knew what was going on in that city, and insisted upon talking about it, and the minute they began talking about it many things became impossible, for there are scores of things that must be put a stop to in our politics that will stop the moment they are talked of where men will listen. The treatment of bad politics is exactly the modern treatment of tuberculosis—it is exposure to the open air."

## CHAPTER VIII

### BEGINNINGS IN ROCHESTER AND ELSEWHERE

Yes, I see it. The foundation of this development in Rochester is the right of free discussion and democratic control. I have wondered why, in our city, although we have spent as much money and effort in having our schools used as social centers as you have, yet we haven't developed the same spirit. The reason is that men haven't made use of the schools, and men haven't made use of the schools because we have superimposed restrictions upon their discussion. It is strange to think that in America, in the most essentially American of our institutions, we have denied this right. Unquestionably, the secret of the success of the Rochester movement is in the fact that it has not been un-American.

Thus spoke Superintendent F. B. Dyer, of the Cincinnati public schools, when visiting the city of Rochester, New York, in 1909; and, in these words, he noted the fundamental difference between the spirit in which the full use of the schoolhouses of Rochester was begun in that city in 1907 and the spirit in which the wider use of these buildings had been begun in New York City, Boston, Philadelphia, Cleveland, Milwaukee, and other towns, including his own city of Cincinnati.

In a word—in each of these other cities, the school board had failed to distinguish between its relation to the adult citizenship and its relation to the children of

the citizens, in the administration of the citizens' property. In each of these cities the members of the school board had made the remarkable assumption that when the citizens delegated to them authority over the young people in the use of these buildings, the citizens at the same time delegated to the board authority over themselves, the citizens, in any use which they might wish to make of their buildings.

Clearly, the school board, being a subcommittee of the citizenship, while being in authority over the children, is subordinate to the body of the adult citizenship, and where the school board fails to recognize this plain distinction, there can, of course, be no civic use of the buildings by normal adults; for the essential character of the citizenship is its sovereignty, and, for the school board to assume that it has a right to dictate to citizens as to what they shall talk about in these buildings is to assume that, in their use of the buildings, they come into the same class with children. Obviously, if the movement as developed in this paternal spirit had succeeded anywhere it would be an evidence of either immaturity or decadence on the part of the citizenship, an evidence that either civic self-respect had not yet developed, or that it had become weak.

The essential difference between the spirit of the movement in New York City, which is typical of that in each of the cities where the school board had failed to distinguish between the authoritative position of the citizenship over it and the subordinate position of minors under it, and the spirit of the movement in Rochester, where the school board showed itself capable of recognizing this distinction when it was pointed out by its president, George M. Forbes, was strikingly shown when Dr. E. W. Stitt, a district superintendent of schools of

New York, spoke at one of the social centers in Rochester. He said: "You people should be very grateful to the school board for their goodness to you in allowing you to use these buildings."

In commenting upon this remark, one of the thoughtful citizens of Rochester, who had been present at the meeting, said: "It seems to me that the attitude which Dr. Stitt expressed, which no doubt reflects the attitude of the school board in New York City, has a vital bearing upon the question which they are discussing there, as to whether they should have a paid or an unpaid school board. I do not believe that any subordinate under the school board, nor the school board itself, could assume such an utterly ridiculous attitude toward the citizens' use of these buildings, if its members were paid for their service."

Undoubtedly, the fact that the school board in the average city has been either an adjunct of the corrupt machine, as it was in Rochester before the change was made which brought such men as Professor Forbes to membership in it; or that it has been amenable to such influences as that of the school book trust; or, at the best, has been made up of a group of prominent citizens, wealthy enough to be able to donate their time, whose impelling motive was one of *benevolence*, has had something to do with the failure of these men and their subordinates to recognize that they have no authority over the body of the adult citizenship, in so far as their use of the buildings does not interfere with the children's activities. Whether paying the members of the school board in New York and other towns would cause them to recognize this primary distinction, and would help them to appreciate that as a subcommittee they are under, not over, the adult citizenship, or not, the point to be noted



here is that this mistaken attitude on the part of the school board is, as Superintendent Dyer noted, the essential reason why, with the expenditure of as much, and in the case of New York, of many times as much, money as was spent in Rochester, the movement has never "developed the same spirit," nor indeed any spirit of democracy whatever.

Three years ago, the "1915 Movement" was still alive in Boston; and, by the way, if there was ever a sincere effort on the part of a private, volunteer organization of uplifters and reformers to do the work that belongs to the citizenship, it was this movement. It had as yet shown few signs of its inevitable flattening out, and one of the projects in which its promoters became interested was the wider use of the schoolhouses. It was recognized that there was an essential difference between the method and spirit of the development in New York and that in Rochester, and it was decided to have both methods presented. It was, therefore, arranged to have Gustave Straubenmüller, associate city superintendent of schools in New York, and a member of the Rochester social center staff, speak at the same meeting.

Mr. Straubenmüller said: "We, in New York, recognize the great fact that Cæsar discovered, that, if we are to keep the people contented and in order, we must amuse them, just as the Roman emperors found that they could keep the people contented by providing them circuses." Mr. Straubenmüller did not mention any plan of providing free bread along with the circuses, but of course they went together in Rome.

In other words, the movement as promoted in New York City had proceeded (and, of course, no criticism is here meant of the work of either Dr. Stitt or Mr. Strau-

benmüller, and least of all, of Dr. Leipziger, but merely an explanation of the paternal spirit of this development, as contrasted with that which gave life and significance to the movement in Rochester) upon the assumption that the American citizenship is of the character of the Roman populace in the weak and rotten days of the empire, and that the public servants, the school-board members, and others, are in the position of the corrupt and bountiful emperors.

At the same meeting it was pointed out that the development in Rochester was based upon the assumption that the citizenship in America is comparable, not to the Roman populace in the decadent days of the empire, but to the Roman citizenship in the great days of the republic, and that the social center is not analogous to the circuses used by the emperors to control the people, but to the comitium in the Forum used by the Roman citizens to control their servants.

It was apparently decided that the citizens of Boston were of the type of the Roman populace in the decadent days of the empire, for the movement was begun there in the paternalistic "uplift" spirit, and thus far has developed little strength.

The inauguration of the social center movement in Rochester had one of the characteristics of the social center itself: It came about through the focusing of many interests in the city to a single point.

On February 15, 1907, delegates from the Central Trades and Labor Council, the Playground League, the College Woman's Club, the Daughters of the American Revolution, the Humane Society, the Labor Lyceum, the Local Council of Women, the Officers' Association of Mothers' Clubs, the Political Equality Club, the Social Settlement Association and the Women's Educational

and Industrial Union, altogether representing about 50,000 people, or a half of the adult population of the city, met in the Chamber of Commerce and formulated the request that the mayor and common council put an item of \$5,000 in the tax levy for social center development, and that the board of education administer the fund.

It happened that James G. Cutler was mayor at the time. At the end of his term, he was refused renomination by the "machine" and "boss" of Rochester. Mr. Cutler favored the project. The money was appropriated and turned over to the school board. This money was to cover the cost of equipment and supervision of school yard playgrounds, that is, children's out-of-door social center activities, as well as the indoor activities, and the school board made its selection of a civic secretary, or supervisor of the wider use of this public property with a view of his experience and qualifications for the practical organization of work indoors and out, as well as his understanding of the possibilities of this development.

By way of preparation for the work the Chicago Field House duplication method, and the system of municipal paternalism in the New York recreation centers were visited and thoroughly studied. The organization and supervision of the out-of-door recreational activities during the summer gave excellent opportunity to become familiar with the situation, and to select competent directors for young people's clubs, for musical organizations, gymnasiums, reading rooms, and so on. By autumn the plans were formulated. It was decided that the beginning should be made in No. 14 school building, which was selected because it was very near the middle of the city, and so, well located to prevent the movement at

its start from being stamped as one especially for either poor or rich.

On Friday evening, November 1st, a general neighborhood gathering was held. At this meeting President Forbes spoke upon the two possible forms of government, the paternal and the fraternal, the one in which the people are managed, the other in which the citizens unite upon a common ground to administer their own affairs. He set forth very definitely the basic, fraternal, coöperative idea of the social center as an institution by which the community might serve itself. After some music by the neighborhood orchestra, which had been organized by the preliminary work of one of the social center staff, who had been employed during the summer in recreation leadership, and an explanation by the neighborhood civic secretary that he was there, not to direct nor to teach, but to take orders as a community hired man, there was a free hour for social intercourse and acquaintance.

The next Thursday evening twelve men gathered in the building. They had been seen individually by the neighborhood secretary, who had explained the idea of citizenship deliberative organization. To be sure, a general announcement had been made of the meeting, but, in view of the character of "politics" in Rochester, the idea of a serious political organization using the school-house as headquarters was too simple and sensible to be grasped at once, so that only these twelve came. As Governor Wilson said, speaking upon this matter: "It does not make any difference how many or how few come in, provided anybody who chooses may come in."

In the preamble of its constitution this organization recognized its unifying center of responsibility in the

ballot-box: "Whereas, the welfare of society demands that those whose duty it is to exercise the franchise be well informed upon the economic, industrial, and political questions of the day; therefore, we form a society to hold in the public school building meetings, whose object shall be the gaining of information upon public questions by listening to public speakers and by public readings and discussions." The membership of the club was recognized as the voting body of the district. Among the officers chosen was a well-to-do physician, who was a conservative Republican elder in a Presbyterian church; a Jewish tailor, who was a socialist; a union printer, and a director in several banks in the city.

At the second meeting the topic was "The Duties of an Alderman," the speaker being the local member of the aldermanic council. At this meeting there were some fifty-seven present. Here began the demonstration of the welcome on the part of officials to the opportunity which citizenship organization gives, and the demonstration of the purely imaginary character of the danger from freedom of discussion in neighborhood gatherings. At the next meeting the new charter was presented by the man who had been most active in its preparation; there followed the discussion of the school service, then the telephone situation, and so on, the attendance soon rising to the point where it was necessary to move from the class-room, which was used at first, to the large room on the ground floor which serves during the day for the kindergarten.

Within a month after this first organization was formed, a request came to the school board from the citizens of a neighborhood in a distant part of the city to have the school building in their district opened for

use as a civic council place, and to have the services of a neighborhood civic secretary. This was in the Tenth Ward, one of the finest "residential" sections of the city. A month later came a similar request from another part of the city; so that, by the end of the first season, there were three buildings in use as neighborhood political discussion headquarters.

During this first year, after the value of free and frank discussion of political and economic questions had been demonstrated, the right of the citizens to use the school buildings was questioned in a rather interesting way. The people of Waterloo, New York, invited Governor Hughes to address a meeting to be held in their high school building, under the auspices of the Republican party organization, and to explain the direct primary proposition, for which he was then contending. They received a notice from Dr. Draper, state superintendent of education, that this could not be permitted.

In order to clarify the distinction between political discussion under the auspices of the single all-inclusive political organization of the citizenship and political discussion under partisan auspices, as proposed in Waterloo, this decision of the state superintendent was made the occasion for holding a large civic club banquet at No. 14 Center (the method of arranging for these occasional banquets was a "chip in" collection of the men's body, the money being turned over to the women who arranged the service, which was participated in by all), at which the use of schoolhouses as political headquarters was discussed. The unanimous thought of the evening, in which both the mayor and the corporation council of the city concurred, was expressed by Howard T. Mosher, chairman of the Democratic County Committee, in these words: "The schoolhouses are the real



places for political meetings. Why should I be compelled to go into a barroom to address a political meeting, where the bartender is using me to advertise his beer? Why should I be compelled to go into smoke-filled rooms to talk on political issues, when we have buildings like this where these things can be taken up?"

Throughout the season there were seventy-two meetings in which citizens gathered to discuss political and economic topics, there being no single instance of discourtesy, as there was the utmost freedom of discussion, with nothing to interfere with the workings of the law of liberty, the restraint of common sense. In each of the newly formed neighborhood organizations, the need of the community for associational and recreational provision for the young people was discussed, and the desire to have the social centers completely developed was expressed. However, there was not a sufficient appropriation to make more than the citizens' use immediately possible.

At the end of the first year, the men of the various neighborhood organizations gathered at No. 14 Center for a dinner and social evening. In Buffalo, Kansas City, and several other towns, the effort had been made to begin the use of school buildings for civic discussion, and had been opposed for one reason or another. The fundamental importance of this right of free examination of public questions, the fact that this use of school buildings was being prohibited in other cities, and the fact that the successful development in Rochester was bringing many visitors to that city, suggested the following song, which was sung at this first anniversary gathering. It went to the air, "When Johnny Comes Marching Home."



## I

'Twas not so very long ago,  
Hurrah! Hurrah!  
The pioneers have told us so,  
Hurrah! Hurrah!  
Twelve good men came to the Center,  
And said: "If we are going to enter,  
We'll talk about the things  
We want to talk about,  
Yes, we'll talk about the things  
That ought to be talked about."

## II

And so these men did organize,  
Hurrah! Hurrah!  
And other clubs began to rise,  
Hurrah! Hurrah!  
And all the time we did not know  
What it was that made us grow,  
'Twas talk-ing about the things  
We wanted to talk about,  
Yes, 'twas talk-ing about the things  
That ought to be talked about.

## III

And now of other towns they say—  
Hurrah! Hurrah!  
And we are hearing it every day,  
Hurrah! Hurrah!  
That of the things that can't be done  
In the schoolhouse—this is one:  
To talk about the things  
Folks want to talk about,  
Yes—to talk about the things  
That ought to be talked about.

## IV

And now they're coming from Buffalo,  
Hurrah! Hurrah!  
A place where we're considered slow,  
Hurrah! Hurrah!  
To learn of the Social Center plan,  
And how we make it that every man  
Can talk about the things  
He wants to talk about,  
Yes, can talk about the things  
That ought to be talked about.

During the first season, while three schoolhouses were used as neighborhood club houses one evening each week for civic discussion, only one, No. 14, the first to be opened, was used each evening, the time being divided so as to give three evenings each week for men and boys, two for women and girls, and one, the "general evening," for everybody together.

At the time of making up the budget for the second year, the Neighborhood Civic Club of No. 14 passed the following resolutions, and, with the signatures of the seventy-five men who were present at the meeting, sent them to the mayor and aldermanic council, endorsing the school board's recommendation that the appropriation be doubled the second year.

Knowing that the question of extending the social center work of the public schools is now before you, and believing that the judgment of the men who have frequented the Social Center at No. 14 school may be of value in this matter, we, the undersigned voters, residing in the neighborhood of No. 14 school, and members of the Men's Civic Club of the Social Center, declare that, in our judgment, the opening of the public schools in the evening for recrea-

tion, reading and club meetings, so far as it has been tried at No. 14 school, is an unqualified success.

Not only does it give opportunity for wholesome athletic exercise, literary culture, and training in good citizenship to the older boys and girls and young men and women of the community and in its free lectures afford opportunities for entertainment and instruction to all the people, but especially in its clubs for men and women it is of great value as a place for the discussion and understanding of civic questions and the development of a good community spirit.

In our opinion there could be no more wise and economical investment of the city's money than in the extension of the social center movement, and we do most heartily indorse the recommendation of the Board of Education in this matter.

The appropriation made for the second year was \$10,000, which made possible, in addition to the installation of new equipment and the opening of more recreation fields out-of-doors, the full equipment and opening for young people's use, as well as for adults, of three centers. These were opened for use, not only each evening, but also on Sunday afternoon, at the request of the Ministers' Association, whose members recognized the advantage of having a wholesome place for young men and young women on that afternoon which they had been accustomed to give over to the direction of the employer of the idle.

During this second season sixteen schoolhouses came to be used as neighborhood club houses for adult citizens, and in this season was formed the city-wide Federation or League of Civic Clubs. The purpose and character of this organization may be shown by giving the preamble to its constitution:

The steady growth of the civic club movement from its beginning in November, 1907, when there was one club with

twelve (active) members, to the present, when there are sixteen clubs, with fifteen hundred (active) members, seems to justify the belief that there is a permanent, real need of non-partisan organization of adult citizens, meeting in the public school buildings, for the purpose of developing intelligent public spirit by the open presentation and free discussion of matters of common interest, and that the civic clubs meet that need.

To increase the effectiveness of the civic clubs and to further their purpose, especially in such matters as the securing and entertaining of distinguished visitors to the city; in giving unity to the expression of the people's will in the matter of desired legislation, and in guiding the further extension of the civic club movement with a view to the welfare of the city as a whole, it is desirable to form a central league or federation of these civic clubs.

We, the chosen representatives and delegates of the several civic clubs of the City of Rochester, do hereby form such a league or federation.

At this point a serious mistake was made, a policy was adopted which was inconsistent with the social center idea. The mayor was not made the president of this organization, as he should have been. The fact was, that Mayor Cutler had been supplanted by another, whom the "organization" had carefully selected for this office as a more dependable and docile servant than Mr. Cutler had proved. This official, of course, though thus put into office, would really have been glad to be the people's mayor instead of the "boss's rubber stamp," and he should have been chosen president of the League of Civic Clubs, but these organizations had not been meeting long enough completely to relieve the citizens of the old "bad man" superstition regarding public officials, and Hon. John B. M. Stevens, judge of the county court, was chosen president.

Judge Stevens proved a splendid president, but it was unfortunate that the mayor was not chosen *ex officio*, for there is no doubt that if he had been he would have transferred his allegiance from the person, who was controlling the city, to the citizenship, just as did minor officers in the city. There was no reason whatever for treating with the "manager" of Rochester, because he was merely a private citizen who volunteered to control the town. Neither was there any reason for fighting him. He should have been regarded as any other citizen, and it should have been assumed that the mayor was the presiding officer. The mistake was made, however, and henceforth, not only was the "boss" bitterly hostile to the social center idea of the citizens assuming their responsibility, which he had carried until he had begun to think that it belonged to him, but the mayor was lined up on the side of the private interferer with the public business, when, of course, he would have been much happier on the side of the organized citizenship.

During the second season the interest continued to grow, and the habit of practical accomplishment began to develop through the securing not only of additions to the equipment of the social centers in various parts of the city, the opening of playgrounds, et cetera, but in bringing about various improvements in street paving, in the installation of convenience stations, and so on, in the town.

At the close of the second season, it was decided to have a League of Civic Clubs' banquet, and to invite Justice of the Supreme Court Charles E. Hughes, who was then Governor of New York, to be the guest of the organized citizenship and to address the league. An agent visited the governor, and received the response

that on account of the pressure of other duties he would not accept the invitation. Thereupon the various clubs decided that he evidently did not appreciate the character of the organization, and an invitation was drafted, and signed by twelve hundred and seventy active members of the adult clubs, and sent on to the governor.

When he arrived, Governor Hughes was taken about the city to visit the various fully equipped and fully used centers, and then brought to the building where the movement had started, for the dinner at night. He said in explanation of this recall of his decision: "When the delegation visited me with the invitation signed by some twelve hundred seventy people interested in this work, I experienced a thrill which it is the highest happiness of a man to enjoy, that twelve hundred seventy people in Rochester, unselfishly interested in such great work, should take such trouble to induce my coming here to speak to them; and that presented it in a light which made refusal absolutely impossible. \* \* \* I think that I can say that it is the first time that I have ever taken back what I have said since I became governor."

It was at this dinner that the governor said of social center development: "I am more interested in what you are doing and what it stands for than in anything else in the world. You are buttressing the foundations of democracy."

Later at the city Convention Hall, where the governor addressed a general League of Civic Clubs, that is, an organized citizens' meeting, he said:

I thought that I held Rochester in just regard. I had an appreciation of its enterprise, its commercial expansion, and of the thrift and intelligence of its citizens, but there are resources of communities which are not reflected in statistics of commerce or industry, which cannot be expressed

in amounts of money representing invested or stored wealth. I have had the great privilege of becoming acquainted to-day with the real resources of Rochester's strength, and I would not have missed that opportunity. It is not in the growth of wealth or of commerce, or in the expansion of industry that we find the true index of civilization. The question is whether, with increasing opportunity, there still remains the generous sentiment; whether with growing wealth and new establishments of industry and commerce there still remain the instincts of human brotherhood. The question really is: While we are conserving individual opportunities are we growing more solicitous of the common good?

You in Rochester are meeting one of the great tests of our democratic life; you are proving that the virtues of humanity far exceed in force the vices of humanity; you are showing that it is health that is really contagious, and that in a prosperous community the most intelligent of the citizens of the community turn their attention to the thought of mutual improvement and of enlarging the area of the real opportunities of life, not in mere money-getting, but in enriching the character, giving chance for expression of individuality, bringing home the information and the stores of knowledge that are otherwise inaccessible to many who are burdened with the toils of the day. It is in the social centers of Rochester that I should look for an answer to the question, whether in a great democratic community you were realizing the purposes of society.

I have enjoyed seeing the splendid provision that is made through this movement for the promotion of physical well-being. How little we realize that character must have its basis in self-respect—and it takes a good deal of a saint to have self-respect when one is not well and vigorous. I rejoice that boys and girls, and men and women, are having a chance to lead a normal life, and to have the physical basis upon which everything else in life so largely depends.

And then you have gone beyond that, to give opportunity for intellectual development. Wherever we may be born,



in stately mansion, or in flat, or tenement, or under the humblest conditions, we are pretty much alike, and it would be a rash man who would try to measure brains by the cost of the nursery. Go anywhere you will, there is a human soul demanding a fair chance, having the right to know what has happened in the world, having the right to be enriched with the stories and poetry of life, having the right to be inspired by the deeds of men of force who have lived amid struggles in the past, having the right to be shown the way upward to that wholesome life which is absolutely independent of circumstances and which is strong and successful because it is the life of a man or a woman doing a man's part and a woman's part in a world which is fairly understood.

I congratulate you upon the use that is made of the fine public buildings that have been erected for educational purposes. I do not think that I have seen any buildings—of course, I except the Capitol at Albany—I do not think I have seen any public buildings so overworked, or so fully worked, yielding such rich dividends upon the public investment through the promotion of the public good, as those school buildings that I visited to-day. We used to pass these stately edifices of education, after school hours, and find them closed and dark, and interesting only because of the architectural beauty or curiosity of their façade. Now I don't know when they get time to clean the public school buildings of Rochester. It seems to me that they are being used all the while, and it is a school extension proposition, so that what the community has paid for is now enriching the community in larger ways than were at first thought possible, although in ways, under wise guidance, which I understand are entirely compatible with the uses for which they were primarily intended.

But you have not stopped there, and I am glad of that. You are organized in civic clubs, and you have federated these clubs, and you are discussing public questions. We cannot have too much of that. I believe, absolutely, in the

success of the merits of a proposition. The one thing we cannot afford to do without in this country is public discussion. There may be those who shrink from a free examination of public questions. You cannot hold the American public in leash, you cannot muzzle American men and women. The only question is, whether you will have it out in a time of turmoil and excitement and agitation, when the coolest minds become somewhat heated, and when there is the strife of a controversy and the anxiety to win, or whether you will have calm discussion, with the sole desire to get at the truth, in time of quiet and when reason and not passion control the dispute. It is of the first importance in every American community that there should be the largest possible opportunity for the rational discussion of all questions that concern the community. Therefore, it is that you have done a great service to Rochester in organizing these forums of public opinion.

I do not overlook the advantage of the press and its great power in forming public opinion. We would not be able to run the government or to exist as a society without the play of these forces so largely represented by our newspapers, but there is such a conflict of voices and so many interests involved, and so many points of view, and so many things to be read between the lines, that the average man cannot always determine what he shall think by what he may read. The influence plays upon him, and, whether he recognizes it or not, his opinions are largely shaped by what he reads, but it is such a delight to sit down with a few for a quiet and calm exchange of opinions, to get at the respective points of view and see, once in a while, where the truth really lies. And so you are at work in your clubs, discussing, getting at the facts to the best of your ability, and applying to those facts the principles in which you believe, under the corrective influence of the arguments of others who are seeking to apply different principles. We have nothing to fear in this country if we can only have enough of that sort of thing. The danger is in having too little of it.

It was this address of Governor Hughes which fully roused the bitter antagonism of the private interests which had hitherto controlled the actions of the people's servants in Rochester, or at least of those which loved darkness rather than light.

It should be remembered that, as Henry Oyen says in his series entitled "The Awakening of the Cities," \* speaking of the condition at the time of the beginning of the social center movement in 1907: "It was shortly before this that Rochester had been described with much truth as 'one of the most sodden cities in the country.' " It should also be remembered that, while the school board had been wrested from the control of the "boss," as to its personnel, yet it was not independent in the levy of its funds, and could do no more than recommend appropriation for social center expenses by the City Hall, that outfit which Dr. William R. Taylor characterized as a "nest of unclean birds."

Of course, as was to be expected, there was a certain type of big business men in Rochester, as there is in every city, that thoroughly disliked the open examination of the industrial conditions of the town. There were men who were benefiting by franchises, water power, gas, street railway, who disliked the frank consideration of the service they were rendering the citizens. There were tenement house owners who disliked the public comparison of the housing conditions in Rochester with those of other cities. There were department store owners who objected to the discussion of their treatment of the Rochester citizens whom they employed.

Then, too, there was a certain sort of church leader who failed entirely to recognize that the assembling of

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\* *The World's Work*, June, 1911, p. 14497.

citizens for deliberation is of the same character as the assembling of citizens to vote, and so is outside of the legitimate province of the sectarian leader to control, except that the clergyman has the same right to participate as other citizens. To be sure the majority of the ministers recognized this and took the stand expressed in the words of the Reverend R. M. West: "In order to adjust ourselves, our laws and society to the changes, philosophical, political, industrial and economic, which have taken place within the past half century, there must be an awakening of the civic intelligence and an arousing of the civic conscience. The neighborhood civic club is the means to that end. I can express approval in no way more strongly than by saying that, although I am a very busy man, I am going to find time to attend the meetings of the civic club that meets in No. 23 school building, as an expression of my common citizenship in this community." But one clergyman, the Reverend A. M. O'Neil, decided that this neighborly gathering of the citizens for civic discussion and the furnishing of young people with wholesome opportunities for recreation was somehow an evil thing. It is probable that if he had investigated he would have come to the same conclusion as did one of the leading members of his church who wrote: "A careful study of the movement extending over a period of nearly two seasons has convinced the writer that it has demonstrated its need and worth. The social center can do more toward eliminating racial, religious and political bigotry than any other known factor."

Finally each of the newspapers, of which the city has five, swung or was swung around to a position of hostility. In no case was this due to the sincere attitude of the newspaper men themselves. Indeed, when the

final show-down came, the ablest editor in the city, Livy S. Richard, of the Rochester *Times*, resigned his position rather than attack the right of the citizens to freely discuss matters of public interest in their own buildings. The change in the attitude of the newspapers, all of which had favored the social center idea at the start, might have been accounted for in part by the fact that one of the neighborhood civic clubs invited Samuel Hopkins Adams, author of "The Great American Fraud," to speak before it upon "Under-currents of Journalism," but the sufficient reason for their opposing the practical development of the means of the citizens' taking care of their own municipal affairs lay in the fact that these newspapers, being themselves private interests, naturally allied themselves with the other private interests as against the growing power of the citizenship seeking to promote the common good.

All this was to be expected, and it was to be taken for granted that the "boss," as the agent of the "powers that prey," should oppose the organization of the citizenship to look after their affairs in the common interest. If he remained "boss" the citizens could not control their own city, and if they became "boss" and sought to understand the administration of their affairs, then he could not continue to rule the town by the old methods of underground manipulation. If the people continued to perfect their machine of democracy, then his machine of corruption would be scrapped. It was natural that he should fight for his control, for it was his source of livelihood, since he had no other income except that derived from securing and protecting the privilege of the great corporations to rob the citizens.

Everything would have gone smoothly, however, even

with the big business men, the few reactionary clergymen and the newspapers opposing the citizens' organized discussion, if the normal social center development had been complete, that is, if the mayor of the city had been assumed to be the president of the city-wide league of civic clubs. To be sure, he had been selected by the "boss" and nominated by his manipulation of the party convention. To be sure, he was "a machine product"; but, so were some of the minor officials in the city; aldermen, for instance, and these invariably, when they actually grasped the idea of the common organization of the citizens, welcomed it and rejoiced in the opportunity it gave them for transferring their allegiance from the agent of the exploiting private interests to the people.

A study of the experiences of other towns leads the writer to the feeling that the reason why the social center movement in Rochester developed into a temporarily losing fight of the citizens for the right to use their own buildings for the orderly discussion of their own common welfare was simply that the citizens failed to assume that the mayor was on the side of the common interest. Those who know that mayor will perhaps smile at the idea that he would be capable of standing out against the powers of municipal corruption or that he would be able to resist the dominance of the "boss," but the writer is sure that he would have done just that thing if the citizens had recognized him as their leader instead of assuming that he was a henchman of the private interferer. It was a ward-heeler of far less natural liking for decent methods of public administration than the mayor had who made the discovery through his association with other citizens on the common ground of the social center, which he put into these words: "By



——! It is more fun to work with people than under or over them!"

As it was, while there were many fine evidences of the natural expression of the social center movement in new and beautiful ways during the third season, it was continually under the fire of misrepresentation from the press and of hostility from the city hall. During this season, through the coöperation of the Rochester Dental Society, the first dental office to be opened in a schoolhouse in Rochester was installed. Through the coöperation of the Rochester Art Club, the beginning of the use of the schoolhouse as an art gallery, which is so finely developed in Richmond, Indiana, was begun in Rochester. During this season, also, the experimentation in the use of the schoolhouse as a local health office which offers the perfectly feasible means of systematizing the public health movement was made through the devotion of Dr. John A. Whittle and the coöperation of the city health department. During this year, too, the neighborhood social center organization was shown to be the ideal agency for the celebration of civic holidays and festivals. For instance, in the celebration of the Fourth of July in one neighborhood, the coming civic club requested that the chief of police keep patrolmen away from the schoolhouse and grounds as they wanted the honor of maintaining order during the celebration, which they did successfully in spite of the fact that ten thousand people gathered during the day and evening. This year saw also the beginning of the use of the schoolhouse as a motion picture theater and the demonstration of the marvelous possibilities of this social magnet not only for young people's gathering but for bringing all people, even those who do not speak English, to a common ground of enjoyment. And



in this third season began the use of the neighborhood librarian's desk in the social center as the local branch of the information distributing system regarding menless jobs and jobless men which demonstrated the perfect feasibility not only of making the schoolhouse a vocational bureau for young people but a permanent employment bureau for all.

The appropriation for this third season had been double that of the second, something more than twenty thousand dollars being available, and by the end of the season, there were eighteen school buildings being used as neighborhood centers.

Unfortunately, however, the fight was on, and in this fight, the mayor who controlled the appropriation was lined up on the side of the boss. The school board earnestly recommended an appropriation which would make possible the continuance and natural extension of the movement. It is significant that in order to retain his grip the boss was forced to abandon the old fiction of party loyalty and to line up all of the forces of reaction and bossism together, that is the "machine" was forced to become bi-partisan, which of course is the preliminary to its ultimate destruction.

The campaign at the fall election centered in the question of the continued use of the schoolhouses as centers of democratic intelligence and popular sovereignty; and, as Ray Stannard Baker says, "the bosses won." It may be well to give Mr. Baker's description\* of what happened afterward, remembering that the citizens labored under the bad handicap of having the

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\* *American Magazine*, September, 1910.

mayor on the side of the private interests instead of on their side.

The bosses won, but their victory did not, after all, settle the problem of the school centers. The people began to wake up. The newspaper discussion waxed warmer than ever; Father O'Neil denounced with greater and greater vigor. The fate of the work hinged on the appropriation. If Boss Aldridge's machine would grant the money, the school centers could go ahead; if the boss would not, they would have to close up the work.

I suppose Rochester never before saw such a succession of demonstrations. Delegations came daily, sometimes almost hourly, to visit the mayor, until the mayor was actually ill with the pressure. Not only were the school center clubs represented, but all the progressive forces of Rochester lined themselves up. Delegates of the Federated Women's Clubs marched to the City Hall in a body, the labor unions sent delegations, so did many of the fraternal orders, especially the Jewish orders. The Protestant Ministerial Association, after a hard fight among its members, declared in favor of the school centers.

Finally as a result of this remarkable popular agitation the progressives succeeded in preventing the entire discontinuance of the appropriation for the school centers, but they had to accept a considerable reduction.

This reduction presaged a curtailment of the work, but so great was the enthusiasm of the staff of directors of the school centers for the thing they were doing that they agreed, when the money ran out, to continue to the end of the season without salary. And that is what happened. They closed their work this spring after the most successful year they have had—the wide discussion and opposition having given to it a new vitality and dignity.

On April 19th the special election for Congressman was held; and the boss, flushed with his victory of last fall, and with no conception of the meaning of the revolt going

on around him, nominated himself for Congress. By this time the reaction was complete. The progressive spirit, fanned into flame, expressed itself at the polls in an overwhelming defeat of the "boss."

Of course, "bossism" is not yet dead at Rochester. "I am still alive," the boss is reported to have said after the election. So are the old authorities which he represents. And the struggle in the future will be fiercer, more desperate, than it has been in the past, as the minds of men become clarified as to the real issues involved.

In conclusion the point I want to make is that the spirit which underlies the defeat of the boss—the same spirit which vivifies the insurgent movement of the west and caused the overturn in Congress during the past summer—is "a great, a steady, a long-continued movement of the public mind," and that it cannot be deflected by abuse nor charged to agitators, for it is the universal struggle of growth, of the new against the old, of self-government against boss-government, of internal authority in religion against external authority, of community enterprise in business against private monopoly, in short, of democracy against aristocracy.

The later developments in Rochester were told by Professor George M. Forbes, who, as president of the board of education, was closest to the movement in that city, in his address entitled "Lessons Learned in Rochester," given at the First National Conference on Social Center Development at Madison, October, 1911. This address has been printed as a bulletin, and, like the other addresses given at this meeting, may be secured by writing to the Bureau of Social Center Development, the University Extension Division, Madison, Wisconsin.

The first off-shoot of the movement in Rochester appeared in a rural community north of the city, in the tenth school district of the town of Greece, where the

citizens came together and organized a neighborhood civic club which not only led to the equipment and full use of their schoolhouse but also served as the means of their securing better service from the railroad and laid the foundation of their coöperative marketing.

During the second year, a delegation of thirty-one people from Buffalo visited the social centers in Rochester and returned with the recommendation that the schoolhouses in Buffalo should be opened for civic use. Their visit was followed by that of Superintendent Henry P. Emerson who, after spending several days investigating, said before one of the civic clubs: "I have recently returned from a trip to Europe which I took to see the educational systems and the development of the public schools. What I saw at one of your social centers last night, and what I have been seeing here to-day, lead me to think that here in America there are some developments as worthy of copying as anything in Europe. I came to Rochester unannounced, because I wanted to see the social centers in their usual activities and not on parade. They seem to be successful and popular. The city of Buffalo means to be progressive and we are ready to copy anything that seems to be an improvement. I think that we shall copy this idea from Rochester." Buffalo, however, did not copy the idea, for after he made this statement, Mr. Emerson learned that the machine in Buffalo did not like the idea any better than the "organization" in Rochester did, and Mr. Emerson did not care to antagonize the men who manage cities by developing the means through which the citizens could control their own town.

The same sort of thing happened in a number of other

cities, Syracuse, Scranton, Boston, Philadelphia, Harrisburg. Attracted by the awakening of the new spirit in Rochester, people in each of these cities attempted to follow that city's example. When they began, however, they discovered that the private groups which were controlling the town seriously objected to the organization of the citizenship to become informed upon public matters, and they either changed to the paternalistic method followed in New York City, or gave up altogether.

Then the idea was transplanted to the west.

One of the visitors of the social centers in Rochester was Senator Winfield Gaylord of Wisconsin. On the occasion of his visit, he said: "This is a miracle in New York State. It is *manna*, which tastes good, but it has no apparent connection with its environment, and I am afraid that it won't last overnight. If this development had appeared in Wisconsin instead of New York, it would have been a *crop* and it would stay."

The fact is that while the strong meat of democracy was proving too much for the feeble digestion of Rochester, it had begun to be the regular diet of Wisconsin and the other progressive states. Indeed the social center idea is just another way of saying the "Wisconsin idea," just the expression in the local neighborhood of the method of fully using the public educational apparatus which on the larger scale of the commonwealth had begun to make the University of Wisconsin the leader among Universities. The mark of the University of Wisconsin is the splendid fact that the people, all the people throughout the state, realize that they own this institution, and that the men and women on its staff are their hired men and women. The map of Wisconsin is a picture of the campus of the

University as served through its great extension division. Most universities have regarded themselves and been regarded somewhat as sacred shrines wherein is kept ever burning the lamp of knowledge and whereto devotees of abstract truth come to worship. The University of Wisconsin has led the way to the new conception that the function of the university is to serve rather as a central power house whose great dynamos produce driving force and light not only for self illumination but for service of light and power to all the state.

Recognizing that the fundamental organization of the citizenship for democratic understanding and expression through the use of the schoolhouse in each district in the state would be the means of facilitating the great movement for the state's self-service through its university, there was established, in the fall of 1910, the Bureau of Social Center Development in the Extension Division of Wisconsin.

The next spring, at Dallas, Texas, was called the first large conference on social center development. Its chief promoter was Colonel Frank P. Holland, owner and publisher of *Farm and Ranch* and *Holland's Magazine*. This public spirited leader, becoming interested in the idea, had put the ablest man on his staff, Charles W. Holman, in the field to spread the gospel of the common ground. The meeting brought hundreds of men and women from all parts of the southwest and served to give great impetus to the movement. To-day schoolhouses are beginning to be used as centers of democracy, recreation, neighborhood through all that region.

In the autumn of 1911, there was called at Madison, under the auspices of the University Extension Division, the First National Conference on Social Center Develop-

ment. Of this conference so conservative a publication as *The Survey* said:

It was a conference to be remembered from New York to California, from Texas to North Dakota. Delegates came representing city clubs, boards of education, welfare committees, churches, universities, and various associations for civic and social betterment. A new spirit of enthusiasm, a new hope for the future, a fresh and eager interest in the interchange of ideas and experiences seemed to fill the air. Before an audience which filled the large gymnasium was read the greeting sent to the conference by Edwin Markham, author of "The Man With the Hoe."

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"We men of earth have here the stuff  
Of Paradise. We have enough!  
We need no other things to build  
The stairs into the Unfulfilled—  
No other ivory for the doors,  
No other marble for the floors,  
No other cedar for the beam  
And dome of man's immortal dream.

"Here on the paths of every day—  
Here on the common human way—  
Is all the busy gods would take  
To build a heaven, to mold and make  
New Edens. Ours the stuff sublime  
To build eternity in time!"

During three days of a varied program this underlying thought was repeated that here we have both the tools and the workmen with which to build a new democracy.

At this meeting the two ideas of developing the full use of the schoolhouse, the paternal, by which the public servants use these buildings to manage the people, and the democratic, by which the citizens use these buildings



to direct the government, were brought into direct and clear contrast by the proposal of a delegation from New York City that the constitution of the national association to be formed should embody the uplift spirit of the New York movement, and the proposal of the western men and women that the movement should be frankly democratic in its aim. After a full discussion, it was finally agreed that out of this meeting should develop the "Social Center Association of America," whose purpose it should be "to promote the development of intelligent public spirit through community use of the common schoolhouse—for *free discussion of public questions* and all wholesome, civic, educational and recreational activities." The fundamental idea of the social center regarding its membership was also expressed in the constitution adopted by this convention, namely, that while one has to join in order to be an *active* member, "the members of this association are the people of the United States."

It was the getting together of some of us to promote the getting together of all of us in the place that belongs to all of us to do the work that no less than all of us can do.

"What I see in this movement," said Governor Wilson, at this meeting in Madison, "is a recovery of the constructive and creative genius of the American people."

## CHAPTER IX

### THE PUBLIC LECTURE CENTER

In the program of complete social center development the use of the schoolhouse as a public lecture center is an important element. In many cities this extension of the use of school buildings has been begun, but nowhere else in the world has so large a public lecture system been developed as in New York City. In Rochester, where the basic organization of the citizens in the several districts made possible the people's having a voice in the selection of the speakers and the topics to be presented, the attendance at each public lecture averaged nearly a third more than in New York City, and thus it was demonstrated that the use of the schoolhouse as a lecture center will be most successful only as it is made a part of a democratically controlled and comprehensive focusing of community activities, instead of being developed autocratically as an independent educational provision, as in New York City and elsewhere.

The steady, consistent expansion of the New York Public Lecture system through the past quarter of a century has been very largely due to the devotion and administrative capacity of Dr. Henry M. Leipziger, who, as Supervisor of Public Lectures, occupies a position not subordinate to, but coördinate with, the office of city superintendent of schools.

Dr. Leipziger here briefly sets forth the results of his long experience in the administration of the New York Public Lecture system:

The social function of the school is best encouraged by the features which may be included in the term school extension. This school extension includes summer schools, vacation schools and recreation centers, but the real pioneer in the work of school extension (which is the opening of the schoolhouse all hours of the day all days of the year) was the use of the schoolhouse for public lectures to adults in New York City, or, as it was first styled, "free lectures to working men and working women."

The underlying principle of this scheme of instruction, for it is a well organized scheme of instruction, is that education must be unending. The details of the system cannot be dwelt upon, but the establishment of this scheme of adult education is justified on the theory that the education furnished by the city shall not end with the high school or the university, but it shall furnish the opportunity for a continuance of education to those whose school life has been limited or who acquire later in life some yearning for higher things.

Established in 1888 in six schoolhouses in the thickly-settled portions of the city, they have continued, until now lectures are held in about 175 places in the City of Greater New York, including schoolhouses, museum halls and church halls, and reaching a total annual attendance of about a million and a quarter. The equipment at each lecture center consists of a stereopticon outfit, with screen, and other necessary apparatus; and during the past five years, having in view the use of school buildings for adult education, many splendid auditoriums

with comfortable seats similar to those in a theater have been provided.

The main idea of the lecture course, of course, is instruction and not entertainment, although as a rational system of entertainment the expenditure could be justified.

The scheme of the lectures covers all the great divisions of human knowledge, but those of more immediate and practical value are given the preference. Lectures on sanitation, health, civics, natural science, descriptive geography, art, music and literature all have their place in this scheme. It is found that courses of lectures, extending to as many as twenty-eight, with examinations and collateral reading, have proven exceedingly popular. These courses of lectures have developed and confirmed the habit of study and they lead indirectly to larger use of the excellent collection of books in the various public libraries in the city.

The public lecture course also maintains its own platform library. The circulating libraries have perhaps a single copy of any particular book. In connection with the courses of lectures the book recommended for collateral reading by the lecturer is provided by the board of education.

Public lectures to adults in the schools bring the very best teachers in the universities and the very best scholars in every field to engage in the work of public teaching, for the lecturers include college presidents, professors, teachers, scholars, artists, physicians, travelers, musicians, et cetera, making a company representing all the phases of intellectual life, held together by a common purpose.

The value of the work is shown by these letters received from auditors. A college graduate writes: "I believe there are many who think the lectures are only for those who have not had the opportunity to receive

a high school or college education. The more intelligent the hearer the greater the benefit derived." Another auditor writes: "I shall try my best to pass the examination, (referring to a course on first aid to the injured), although I am very absent-minded and nervous. If I fail I shall at least have tried my best and learned something to my advantage. I cannot say anything in favor of the Monday night lectures as my husband only attends them because I have three children who cannot be left alone. I am glad my beloved spouse stays with them on Thursday evenings to grant me the benefit of the lectures."

The extended uses of the public school only indicate the wider influence that the school should exert. The schoolhouse is the natural meeting place of the American citizen. Here all meet upon an equality and in the schoolhouse it would seem as if the citizens of any particular neighborhood should naturally meet to consider questions either of neighborhood interest, or questions that relate to broad educational policies. The schoolhouse should be the natural meeting place of all citizens to consider great questions of politics and each schoolhouse should become a genuine "people's forum," for, where better than in the schoolhouse can we say, "Come let us reason together!"

The results observed from the public lectures during the past twenty years may be summarized as follows:

- (a) Continuation of systematic study;
- (b) Americanization of immigrants;
- (c) Improvement of sanitation and health;
- (d) Increased interest in our city's government;
- (e) The formation of people's forums for discussion of social and economic questions;

- (f) Greater efficiency and earning power;
- (g) Appreciation of our art and science museums;
- (h) Improved reading taste of the public;
- (i) Wider and larger interest in the finer things of life.

## CHAPTER X

### THE BRANCH PUBLIC LIBRARY

There is no specialization of a form of community self-service more remarkable than the independent development of the public library. This movement is distinctly and wholly educational. It has not been subject to commercialization as have the recreational forms of community activity which began in the schoolhouse of the early days. Indeed, the establishment of a library in each schoolhouse which should serve, not only the children, but all the members of the community, was a very important part of the propaganda of the leader in early public school development, Horace Mann. Moreover, in some cities the establishment of public library service was, at its beginning, made a branch of the public education system. Perhaps the importance of public library provision would not have been realized if there had not been a period of separate development, but now men are turning to the problem of coördinating public library service with other forms of social self-education.

In Grand Rapids, St. Louis, Buffalo and other cities schoolhouses have begun to be used as branch libraries, or, at least, as distributing stations. In the city of Rochester, where there is no central municipal library, the possibility of public library service entirely through the use of the schoolhouses as social centers, with no expense for a separate building, was demonstrated.



Dr. Charles E. McLenegan, the Public Librarian of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, is exceptionally well fitted to discuss the use of the schoolhouse as a branch public library, for he came to his present position from extended and successful experience as a school administrator.

Mr. McLenegan writes:

There are some classes in the community who will have books without a public library; and there are some who will never look into a book although they are as plentiful as the autumn leaves. Between these two extremes is that great body of our fellow citizens who toil six days each week in shops, in offices, in stores, in homes, many of whom do read, more of whom would read, and whose circumstances compel them to depend on the public library for their books. These are the people who can be won to read books to their great profit, if access to these books is not made too difficult. In this matter of getting at the books, it is well to consider a natural law, which is hard to state, but not hard to recognize. A very gentle force, persistently and continuously applied, can produce a most tremendous result. Nature works upon us in that way constantly; in fact, it is nature's customary way of working, except when she strikes us by lightning. She does that when she is done with us. Place an obstacle, however slight, in the path of a customary human choice and you immediately cut off a certain number from the enjoyment of that choice. If the obstacle be an exceedingly slight one, only a few of the acts are hindered; but if the obstacle be a more considerable one, more and more are hindered until the obstacle may amount to a prohibition of the action.

To illustrate this by a concrete example. If the sugar trust raises the price of sugar one cent per pound in the

fruit season, the result is always a falling off in the sale of fruit for preserving, and a further rise in price of sugar produces a glut in the fruit market and the infliction of ruinous loss on the fruit grower. That slight obstacle thrown in the way of each housewife influences millions of people. After two successive rainy days what a shrinkage of optimism there is in the world! In a mild winter how business is depressed! Nature governs us every day and from year to year by the slightest and gentlest of impulses and prohibitions, and yet the whole human race moves obediently and unconsciously to these impulses. It is not the mighty force that produces the great effect. It is the slow-moving, unobtrusive, quiet force, acting on vast areas and vast numbers, that really works a miracle. Now what is the application of all this profundity? Simply this:

In all these human actions which involve great numbers of people who are free agents, if you wish them to do a particular thing, you must rid the act of discomfort to the actor. You must make it easy and comfortable for people to get the books. The modern conception of a public library is a place where books are kept for the free use of all the people. The place must be democratic in atmosphere, with no more chance for a man, woman or child to be under constraint because of social position than there would be in Heaven. There must be "welcome" written over every door, and "service" written on the face of every attendant. A public library with a grouchy attendant is a contradiction in terms, for the library is the continuation school for the people, and the problem of the library is how to get the people to come to the school and use it. A library should be as "waywise" as a railroad corporation, and you notice that the good railroads in the country have subtracted

the grouchy and the saucy servants; so we assume that, in the library, those who serve the public are there in the modern spirit of glad service.

Only those who have the best that college and school can give know how little that education is compared to the greater education which every man gives himself, and your collection of books in these days is your true university.

The librarian's problem, therefore, is a simple one to comprehend. It is nothing more than the making of this school accessible to the greatest number of people and most helpful to them when you have gotten your people to come.

If the library is the people's college and continuation school, the question of paramount importance is how to get people to come to the library. A fine central library is a great thing to raise a glow of civic pride. It gives a city a flavor of intellectuality. The real question is how to minister to the man who wishes to use books. Does this fine central library make it easy for the people of the city to use books for serious purposes? Does it add anything to the difficulty of using books? Does it add a temptation to dwell in ignorance, rather than encounter the exertion of going to the library? Is there a shortage in the central library idea? If so, the grand central library idea should be looked into.

Mr. Carnegie has built more libraries than any other man in the world. With him, the building of a library is a simple business question—how to make the building of the greatest service to the largest number of people. He is no spendthrift and he is not a sentimentalist. He puts up no buildings because he wishes to glorify himself, or to exalt his name, or merely to put up a library. The sole question is one of utility. He has found that

if you draw a circle with a radius of one mile around a library, you will have included about all the territory in your circle that this library can serve effectively. Roughly speaking, a space of about four square miles is the sphere of influence of a public library. The best way to bring the case home is to try it on yourself.

Suppose you come home in the evening from the shop—I am speaking now of a city library—suppose you come from the shop, where some of the really thoughtful men of the modern city work. You reach home possibly at six o'clock, change your clothing and remove the grime of the day's toil, get your supper and take a little thoughtful tobacco to soothe the irritations of the day and induce a philosophic spirit. That program is not too self indulgent, is it? The man who told us how to live on twenty-four hours a day, says that every man in creation has a right to that much. Put on your overcoat and go to the library a mile away. If your courage does not show signs of evaporating, you are a good man. If you can keep it up two nights a week during the winter, you are a wonder. It does not matter whether this man comes from a machine shop, a brewery, a tannery, an office, or a store. A tired man is a man who is tired, and eight hours work per day makes any man tired. See, then, how this man is handicapped in the use of the library, if the central library is a mile distant from his home. If he walks, he is handicapped by the distance and by his fatigue after his day of toil. Try it yourself. If you can pursue a systematic and profitable course of reading throughout the winter, visiting the library once a week, you have demonstrated your right to the fruits of the earth, for you are of that stern stuff that nothing will keep down or turn aside. You are a profitable citizen, not because of the library, but in spite of it.

Suppose next that he rides to the library. Again he is handicapped, for the car fare is about a four per cent. tax on his day's wages. When you ask a man for money, you will usually find that he is from Missouri, and he is easy compared to the gentle sex—but that is another story. You cannot blame him, for this is a direct tax and not concealed in the velvet paws of a protective tariff. It is a handicap just the same, and remember that the rise of one cent in the price of sugar has proved enough to make man forego something to eat. Where a man gives up something to eat, what show have things of the intellect in the scuffle?

Third, whether he rides or walks, the man who lives a mile from the library is handicapped in the matter of time. Complaint of the impossibility of getting in any serious work in the evening in the main library is one most frequently met. In this aspect of the case, we are in a real cul-de-sac. It has not been demonstrated that a library can be kept open later than nine o'clock in the evening profitably, and any one who has watched the long dark procession of workers filing to work on winter mornings before daylight, can understand why. Scipio LeMoyne understood it: "To shoot straight, go to bed the same day you get up; and to think straight, use same policy."

What can a man who works during the day do in a great central public library? It is well worth pondering, because the opportunity for improvement of conditions is very great. The improvement must come from the library folk, for the patient endurance by the public of insufficient service is one of the most pathetic things in life. Applying Mr. Carnegie's rule, every city has a fair measure of its present efficiency in library service. Every four square miles at the least should have its branch at

the cross roads. The library should be brought as near the home as the school is and be just as convenient as the postoffice; we would not tolerate a postal system that obliged us to go to the central office for our stamps or our money orders. Now that we have coupled the two, why is not the schoolhouse the proper place for the neighborhood branch of the public library? In the law founding the Milwaukee Public Library there seems to have been a prescience of this day on which we meet, which dictated the words making it a "branch of the public school system." The Milwaukee Public Library was started in the right direction. It has not traveled far as yet, but it will I hope be known hereafter for its relation to the public school system.

Merely giving the library a room in the schoolhouse does not meet the requirements of the case at all. That is compliance with the form and not the spirit. A library is as much a part of a school as is a teacher or a recitation room. Every schoolhouse built should have a permanent and special part set aside for the branch of the public library. This room should have its own heat and light and its separate entrance from the street. It should be accessible to the pupils from the schoolhouse and it should be open after school so that the citizens of the neighborhood can have their turn in its use. Why should the plant be used only five hours a day and closed to the public after that? This library should teach the pupils of the schools the use of books as instruments for finding out what they wish to know. Few boys in high school ever learn how to use the aids that libraries have in finding information. They are helpless when turned loose among books to find their way to the desired information. This the library should teach pupils in every school, and when you have taught public school pupils

some dexterity in this use of a library, you have given them a powerful impulse to use the library ever after as a continuation school.

It is amazing how few people know the purpose of an index or of a table of contents in a book. Fewer still know "Poole's Index," or the "Reader's Guide" which open a wealth of current publications. Only the high school boys who go in for debates ever learn these. When, however, boy or man learns to use these and a few more, it is really gratifying to see them go. "The world is all before them where to choose." These boys never stop using books when they leave school, and when they wish to know anything they do not have to ask aid of any one. This is making your library a continuation school and this is the way to do it. I doubt if anything that a child learns in school classes is comparable in importance to him to this knowledge of how to use books. It stays by him as long as he lives and is an element of power in his character and a mighty engine of self education in his after life.

Another great advantage of this branch in the schoolhouse is that it gives every home an almost ideal means of communication with the library—and that is one of the unsolved problems in a large library—how the home may communicate with the library. Thousands of little messengers travel every day from the home to the school. All that is needed are proper finding lists and the children do the trotting for a tired or busy father or mother. As a means of communication it is ideal, and nothing like it as a means of reaching the homes now exists. Think that over a few times. I am sure the more you think of it, the better you will think it.

Last and greatest of all is the fact that this branch of the schoolhouse enlarges the function of the school



and bridges the path from the conscious training which is given the child by the teacher to that larger training which the child will give himself hereafter. It realizes and puts into concrete form the great truth, only half understood, that a university education is little more than the careful reading of certain books which, in the judgment of wise men, fairly represent the accumulated knowledge in this or that line of human effort. It is reassuring to reflect that the Washingtons, the Franklins, the Lincolns, and the host of self made men like them were not so badly made. Would we could get more of them.

Is it a dream—this branch of the library in the schools? Not at all for the future. The old schools that are now erected will hardly ever be serviceable in this way. They are there to stand as monuments of how not to do it unless they are rebuilt and so give us a chance. For that part of the city which is built up, we shall have to use branches of the ordinary type. But from now on, in the building that is to come, and that is to mark our contribution to the progress of the day, let us hope for library branches in the public schools.

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## CHAPTER XI

### THE PUBLIC ART GALLERY

"You cannot sell chromos to everybody in Richmond," says Mrs. M. F. Johnston, President of the Richmond (Indiana) Art Association. "I think that when history is written it ought to be recorded that early in the twentieth century, in Richmond, a common council spent one hour discussing the value to the town of an art exhibit and,—appropriated money from the City Treasury for its support." The amount of that appropriation was one hundred dollars. The story of how schoolhouses began to be used as art galleries in Richmond, so that the expense of a separate building was saved, and the pictures were placed where they would most powerfully and continually benefit the whole community, a part of the story that lies back of Richmond's earning the title "The Art Center of America," is told by one of that city's distinguished men, the Honorable William Dudley Foulke.

Mr. Foulke writes:

Richmond, Indiana, a city of a little more than twenty thousand inhabitants, is a pioneer in the use of a public school building as a public art gallery. In that city, in 1897, it was proposed by some of the club women and local artists with the active coöperation of T. A. Mott, superintendent of public schools, to hold an exhi-

bition of paintings. A number of citizens in the town had private collections of no great size, but each containing a few pictures of rather remarkable excellence. These were collected, and the Garfield School Building, the best then in the town, was loaned by the school commissioners and the superintendent for the purpose of exhibiting them, just at the beginning of the summer vacation. The walls were draped in some of the rooms, the blackboards covered, and the desks removed. The light was excellent, and the exhibit proved to be highly successful. The people of the city were astonished to know how many good pictures they had in their midst. The school children visited the gallery, the works exhibited were explained to them, and the public generally was invited. An art association was established, and Ella Bond Johnston, the wife of one of our leading physicians, who had shown great enthusiasm for the undertaking, soon became its president. At this time she had had no special facilities or advantages for the study of art; but realizing the importance to the community of a continuance of exhibitions like the one then held, she determined that they should be repeated, and afterwards fixed a limit of twenty-five years during which she proposed to devote a great part of her time and energy to this work.

The association grew in numbers; the use of the Garfield School building was repeated each successive year; professors in a local college, teachers in the schools, newspaper men, local artists and business men coöperated; the association was not long afterwards incorporated, and all these elements were represented upon its board of directors, composed of seventeen of the citizens, men and women. More recently a permanent art committee of nine and a finance committee of seven have been

added. The annual dues were merely nominal, but subscriptions were circulated among some of the members who were willing to coöperate and gifts were received from others. The association has now held fourteen of these exhibitions, and mainly through the energy of Mrs. Johnston, who visited the studios and collections of art in the east, as well as at Chicago, Cincinnati and St. Louis, a supply of excellent pictures for each exhibition has been procured. The city council has also made a moderate appropriation for these exhibitions; and, although there was no law which authorized this, yet so universal was the sentiment in favor of this enterprise, that the amount is annually appropriated by unanimous vote and no one in the city is heard to object.

All exhibitions are absolutely free to every one, and people come from the towns and country around. There is usually a formal opening, with short addresses, and there are lectures upon questions connected with art during the exhibition.

From the surplus of the moderate fund accumulated the association began to buy some pictures; at first, pictures by Indiana artists, but the field was soon extended. The fact of these purchases encouraged artists in other places to send their work, and then Daniel G. Reid, a wealthy man now residing in New York, but formerly of Richmond, gave \$500 a year for the purpose of purchasing a picture. Other associations and individuals have given single pictures; the Women's Club of Richmond gave one; a gentleman from New York presented the association with a bronze tortoise fountain by Janet Scudder (some of whose work is in the Luxembourg); and a picture which won a competitive prize in Paris was presented by the International Art Union of that city; until now the permanent collection numbers some

twenty canvases which, taken as a whole, are works of remarkable merit.

Among the exhibitors are John W. Alexander, Henry Mosler, William Chase, George Inness, Jr., William Coffin, Charles Curran, Ben. Foster, Samuel Isham, Henry Ranger, A. E. Albright, Pauline Dohn Rudolph, Karl Buehr, L. H. Meakin, J. H. Sharp, H. F. Farney, Charles Warren Eaton; besides the best Indiana artists, T. C. Steele, William Forsyth, R. B. Gruelle, Otto Stark, J. Ottis Adams; and local artists of merit, J. E. Bundy, Charles Connor, and others. Foreign work was loaned by New York dealers; Breton, Bougereau, Cazin, Daubigny, Von Bremen, Rico, Schreyer and Thaulow have been represented. In the last exhibit was seen an exquisite Japanese landscape by Hiroshi Yoshida. Purchases are also made from the collection by citizens of the town; and a few years ago the children of one of the schools earned a picture fund of \$150 and bought an attractive painting for their schoolroom—"Shadows on the Wall," by Albright of Chicago. This same school earned another \$150 to purchase "Hills in Springtime" by William Wendt. The public schools own, besides five hundred photographs of famous pictures, oil and water color paintings to the number of sixty, mostly purchased from the annual exhibitions.

The paintings, however, are only one feature of the exhibition. There is usually a collection of etchings; generally a small collection of bronzes, to which Mr. McMonnies, Miss Scudder and others have contributed; another room is devoted to drawings, sketches and colored prints. The handicrafts are represented, pottery, metals, books, leather and textiles of artistic character. Some are loaned by our citizens, some are sent by the designers. In order to encourage the development of

painting in Indiana, a small prize is given each year, by one of the ladies of the city, to the best picture painted by an artist residing in that state. Judges are selected from Cincinnati, Chicago, St. Louis and elsewhere, who come and pass upon the pictures. It is astonishing how many creditable canvases a prize of this kind will attract, not so much for the money as for the reputation involved, because the Richmond exhibition has now come to be recognized throughout the state as a matter of some little importance. A prize of fifty dollars this year attracted some thirty pictures, most of which were really excellent works. Another prize is given to the best picture from an artist of the city, and it is astonishing how greatly these exhibitions and the competition thus developed has stimulated the group of Richmond painters.

Mrs. Johnston's work in the collection and exhibition of these pictures soon led other cities of Indiana to follow the example of Richmond. First, it was Muncie, and the same collection was exhibited in both places. This began more than four years ago. A year later Vincennes joined the group; then Indianapolis and Lafayette became part of the circuit; and finally Fort Wayne and Terre Haute. By means of the circuit which Mrs. Johnston has developed a larger number of pictures can be secured, and better pictures and at less expense than where the exhibition is confined to a single city. The impulse throughout the state in the encouragement of art has been very great but in no other place has it been so closely connected with public instruction.

The most important step thus taken, however, was when the present high school building was erected. That building has just been completed. It is a beautiful structure, and the school board determined to incorporate in

it three rooms for a permanent art gallery. These rooms are located above the auditorium, are lighted from the roof, and are equipped for the purpose as perfectly as the best modern galleries anywhere. The gray-green covering of the walls sets off the pictures to the best advantage. The last annual exhibition, from October 19th to November 3rd, 1911, was attended by multitudes of our citizens and others from all parts of the state. The collection was composed of four classes of paintings: first, the permanent collection of the association; second, the circuit collection, selected and arranged by Mrs. Johnston; third, the pictures by Indiana artists exhibited in competition for the prize; fourth, a few pictures loaned by private individuals.

By means of this association and these exhibitions the interest in art in the city of Richmond has been stimulated to such an extent that a valuable series of twenty university extension lectures was given last winter by Mrs. C. K. Chase (who has made a special study of the various schools of painting, both abroad and in America, including the Italian, Dutch, Spanish and English schools), illustrated by a large number of photographs and lantern slides. This instruction was given by an expert thoroughly qualified to present the history of art and its essential qualities. Another important feature of many of these exhibitions has been that they contain a collection of drawings and paintings by the pupils in the public schools. The first efforts in this direction were necessarily crude, but it is astonishing how the quality of the work has developed year by year and a good deal of that which is now given is of a very high order of merit.

Such have been the results in our city of the use of a public school building as a public art gallery when com-



bined with the efforts of a single individual who has shown extreme energy and organizing power, as well as excellent taste and discrimination in the selection of objects of art. Under similar conditions the same results can be accomplished elsewhere—the public will always be found willing to coöperate in an undertaking of this kind if it is well conducted.

## CHAPTER XII

### THE MUSIC CENTER

One of the most valuable uses for which the youth and older people gathered in the schoolhouse during the early period of spontaneous social center development was community music. There are still districts in which the old-fashioned singing school continues to meet. The modern social center not only carries on this tradition of choral training, but offers opportunity and stimulus for the other forms of musical expression which are possible in every community.

First, the Social Center furnishes the place for communal "folk" singing. Dr. Samuel Crothers said of the singing in one of the centers in Rochester, where for half an hour before the lectures on general neighborhood evenings everybody sang: "You have found a substitute for war. You know that we peace fellows have all the arguments but one; and that one has been unanswerable. The military fellows say that it takes a war to make people really feel together—to know a common interest, to *own* a common country. And how do they prove it? They tell us that from '61 to '65 we were a singing nation, and that's true. Those were the days when we learned 'Marching Through Georgia,' 'Tenting Tonight,' 'Mine Eyes Have Seen the Glory,' 'Tramp, Tramp, Tramp,' 'When Johnny Comes Marching Home.' We learned them then and we sang them then.

Since then we've just been warming over the words. I was a boy in those days. I heard it, and I never expected to hear that note again. But I have heard it again. I have heard it here to-night. You sang in that spirit. What does it mean? It means that down underneath you have been gripped by that same throbbing common reality, not hate this time, nor fear, but love. You *know* a common interest. You *own* a common country. You've proved it, for you've sung in that spirit. You've found what the military fellows say we can never get without fighting. You've spoiled the only argument for war."

Second, Mr. Will Earhart, the director, not only of the music of the children, but of all the people gathered in the schoolhouses in Richmond, Indiana, has shown choral training to be as feasible and as artistically and socially valuable in the modern city as it was in the simple pioneer community.

Third, complete social center development necessitates orchestral training and furnishes the means by which the members of a neighborhood orchestra may pay back to the community in musical service far more than the cost of publicly employing a director and purchasing the less commonly used orchestra instruments. Where a community gathers once a week for a general neighborhood evening there is opportunity for the service of a neighborhood orchestra in furnishing the overture, in accompanying the singing and in furnishing the music for the closing social hour.

Fourth, this general gathering furnishes constant stimulus to the individual by offering opportunity for participation in the community entertainments.

Professor Arnold Dresden, who has aided in the development of community musical expression in Chicago and Madison, writes:

Music seems to many of us a form of culture so far removed from actualities as not to deserve the attention of earnest men and women engaged in serious work. Indeed it must be granted that under present circumstances, the opportunity for musical appreciation and expression is so restricted, that they are rapidly becoming privileges of the better-to-do, at least if we are agreed that learning to play an instrument or buying a piano on the installment plan do not of themselves open up such opportunity.

However, no one who is earnestly concerned with social betterment can afford to disregard the power of music, or the opportunities for hearing and creating music which our communities offer. That rhythm and melody, the two elements which with harmony form the foundation upon which music rests, lie deep in our human nature, is shown for instance by the almost instinctive use of whistles or call signals; by the short calls with which men who are pulling a heavy load and want to work in unison precede their exertions every time. On the other hand, the desire for tonal stimulus is not the least of the influences which lead the city boy and girl to the cheap vaudeville or to the dance hall.

In what way can music be made to play a more vital part in the lives of our people? How can the great power be made socially useful?

Between the call of the sailor as he hoists the sails and the modern symphony lies a wide field. A multitude of forms for musical expression is being used to-day to sing the song of our complex life. Gradually musical forms have developed until now they seem to have gone far from the simple directness of the music of the wind and of the birds. Its interpretation of our human experiences has become hard to understand. But as a prophet

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can make us see through the complexities of our modern lives and feel what is fundamental in our existence, so the masters of musical form use their finer tools to penetrate more deeply into and make us feel more keenly the things that are universal. To learn to follow them, therefore, is what is necessary in order to bridge the chasm which now exists between music and progress towards mutual understanding. Much training is necessary to accomplish this; but above all, opportunity to hear and learn to understand good music should be plentiful.

There is hardly a village in Germany, Austria, France, or any of the other countries of Western Europe, that has not its municipal orchestra or band. The Kaim orchestra, which for many years has been the municipal orchestra of Munich, is one of the famous orchestral organizations of Europe. Choral societies, many of them of excellent quality, are numerous. But, more than that; let us go with Richard Wagner \* to "some small village on a winter night and look in at the little room; there sit a father and his three sons about a round table; two of the boys play the violin, the third one plays the viola, the father the 'cello; what you hear them play with such understanding and so full of emotion is a quartette, composed by this slender short man who is beating time. He is the schoolmaster of the neighboring village, and the quartette that he has composed is full of art, beautiful and deeply felt."

In many places an effort is being made to bring about more intimate acquaintance with the great masters of music. Boston has had a department of music in its city government since 1898. Besides band concerts conducted under its auspices in different parts of the city,

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\* "Gesammelte Schriften und Dichtungen," Vol. I, p. 152.

during the summer, that department arranges concerts of chamber music given during the winter in the auditoriums of the schools. New York has been furnishing a great deal of good public music during the last two years. The work done in Rochester is well known and doubtless many other cities are following suit.

The results arising from such efforts must of necessity be comparatively small, because it can bring about only a very superficial contact with the work of the masters. We must build up musical traditions among the people of this country, and we must learn to know, to preserve and to cultivate the musical talent and traditions which so many of our immigrants bring to us.

I shall not easily forget the enthusiasm aroused in an audience at one of the centers in a Bohemian neighborhood in Chicago when they heard some of their folk-songs played by some one unknown to them, or when they heard sung, in their own language, songs composed by the Bohemian, Dvorák.

The school as a social center furnishes an excellent opportunity for systematic work of this kind. It has the atmosphere in which anything that tends to bring out our common human bonds must thrive. It brings us in contact with our fellow-men in a desire for mutual understanding and appreciation. It is an effort to find out where our common roots lie, so necessary in these days, when there is so much to promote misunderstanding and aloofness. There, then, we can look for music to make its power felt. Through frequent presentation of the simplest works at first, of the more complex ones later, accompanied by explanatory comment, the foundation for an appreciation of good music can be laid and opportunity for self-expression be given by the formation of choral and orchestral clubs. Instruction in the

playing of an instrument can be given free, as is being done in Rochester, the pupil repaying the community later on in assisting in the public concerts. Where good human performers are not available, mechanical performers could be used to advantage, just as moving pictures are being used where the stage is out of reach. Under appropriate arrangements between different social centers, able musicians and lecturers on music can be engaged to visit the centers from time to time presenting, interpreting and explaining. Thus the social value and importance of music may begin to make itself felt.



## CHAPTER XIII

### THE FESTIVAL CENTER

“And for the support of this Declaration, with a firm reliance on the protection of Divine Providence, We mutually pledge to each other our Lives, our Fortune, and our Sacred Honor.”

The statement announcing the birth of the American Nation, which closed with these words, was a declaration of common interest, of interdependence. The men who adopted and the people who endorsed this declaration were, for the first time, clearly conscious of a common bond. And this conscious unity was the essential fact which gave meaning to the statement of defiance embodied in the earlier part of the declaration.

A true commemoration of the adoption of that declaration, a true celebration of the Fourth of July, is a reaffirmation of this principle of our common interest.

We can't get up any deep enthusiasm over the reaffirmation of the statement that henceforth we are going to be independent of Great Britain, because, for one reason, we know that we aren't. That we should not be subordinate to Great Britain, we take as a matter of course. But we now recognize that the denial of a false relation is not the final adjustment. We are more or less conscious of moving on to the next step; that is, we are ready to affirm the true relation between the United

States and Great Britain and all other nations—not dependence, nor independence, but interdependence.

The basic all-inclusive organization of the community using the schoolhouse as the social center furnishes the means and the place most appropriate for the celebration of both the civic unity within the neighborhood and the growing friendliness among the nations, which are embodied in the national festival.

Not only is the community organization at hand for the ideal celebration of the Fourth of July where democratic social center development has been begun, but where community organization has not been established the arrangement for a "Sane Fourth" celebration offers a splendid occasion for effecting the all-inclusive gathering, which, made permanent, is the basis of social center development.

In addition to the out-of-doors activities, the pageant, the games, and fireworks, for whose preparation the schoolhouses afford the convenient meeting places, this use of the schoolhouse as the center of festival celebration has suggested and caused to be realized a peculiarly appropriate form of observing the National Festival. This is the civic dinner in celebration of the arrival of youth and of naturalized immigrants at full citizenship. This "New Citizens' Birthday Banquet" was first celebrated in the city of Rochester, where its suggestion, coming simultaneously from several sources, seemed to be a spontaneous expression of the social center idea. The new citizens, those who had come into the right to vote during the preceding twelve months, were the guests. The older citizens who attended acted as hosts by each paying for a plate for one of the guests, as well as for his own. The addresses began with the Welcome of the City, given by the mayor or his representative,

followed by a response from one of the new citizens. This "Welcome Feast" may be held at another time than on the Fourth of July, as it has been at Superior, Wisconsin, but it seems especially appropriate to the Fourth.

More has been done with the organized celebration of the "National Festival" than with that of any other holiday, but there is scarcely a holiday in the calendar which is not capable of beautiful and beneficial observation when once a community has secured in the schoolhouse the place and in the engagement of a neighborhood secretary the personal leadership service for its self-expression, and for nearly all the holidays their celebration in and through the social center tends to bring forth, not only new dramatic forms, but deeper significance. Thus, it was only with the beginning of the community celebration of Hallowe'en in Milwaukee that the significance of that day of gathering of good and bad and all souls, the living and the dead, came forth with its appeal to the widening of sympathies. In a Jewish neighborhood the social center celebration of Christmas in its original significance, as the time when the sun starts back with its promise of summer in the midst of the cold, made of that day for the cosmopolitan neighborhood a time of quite universal peace and good will: so, the celebration of the beginning times of the New Year and the celebration of the spring at Easter time. The social center also offers the ideal opportunity for the celebration of the birthdays of Washington and Lincoln. For instance, the fact that Garibaldi was born on the anniversary of Washington's birth suggested a joint celebration by the Italian and the native born citizens in a social center, in which the Italians presented an American flag to hang on the walls of the schoolhouse and the Americans presented an Italian flag to hang with it, the two

flags crossed, to serve as a token of better racial understanding within the neighborhood. Then, too, social center organization tends to make of occasions not usually recognized as community festal, times of reunion. For instance, in the town of Fairchild, Wisconsin, the commencement of the high school was made a town celebration, all the people, as well as the graduating class, adopting the motto, "Life Is Now Our School."

The intimate relation between the use of the schoolhouse as a center of musical expression and training and its use as a center of festival celebration is obvious. The convenience of its use for neighborhood festivals, which, of course, should include musical expression, is here set forth by Mr. E. S. Martin, Chairman of the Festival Committee of the Playground and Recreation Association of America:

The problem of celebrating our national holidays in a rational manner is one that merits serious consideration and careful thought. There are several days out of each year which are recognized all over the United States as being occasions for special festivals, though not all of them are named by the statutes as legal holidays.

They are New Year's Day, Washington's Birthday, Arbor Day, May Day, Memorial Day, Flag Day, the Fourth of July, Labor Day, Columbus Day, Hallowe'en, Thanksgiving and Christmas. The celebrations that take place on these days may be of national importance in the sense that they are nation-wide, but are they of national importance in the sense that they contribute directly to the development of the nation? Has the day set aside by the state to commemorate some great event accomplished the fullness of its mission when it occasions

the meeting of groups of people for an idle jollification, or even when it inspires the preparation of a scholarly paper or the delivery of a learned lecture on the dead event? Surely the fact that a nation has set aside an entire day to be observed by the people as they will, ought to mean more to society than this.

In the early days of the Republic when the population was predominantly rural and fairly homogeneous in respect to race, religion and tradition, the festival served to bring people together and produce a spirit of geniality and good feeling that did much to wipe out past differences and unify public opinion. To-day a very much changed condition of affairs confronts us; practically every race, nationality and religion in the world is represented in the American Republic, with the result that class distinction has been raised up, which was unknown at the dawn of our national history. The fact that the festivals are observed by each social class in its own peculiar way tends to fix the lines of social cleavage by strengthening the class consciousness; and anything that tends to the establishment of rigid class lines shakes the foundations of democracy.

In a country where the elements of the population are as heterogeneous as they are in the United States it may be expected that class barriers will tend to become more and more marked unless counteractive agencies are set to work to dissolve them.

In the school social center we have just such an agency; and the arguments that justify the expansion of public activities in recreation and education apply with special force to the utilization of public school property in the celebration of national holidays. The taxpayer is beginning to realize that he is not getting full returns for money invested when he permits school build-

ings to deteriorate with the year while standing unused the greater part of the time. With the school buildings open on holidays, when many stores and factories are closed, an excellent opportunity is presented to bring people together in the practice of democracy so that a realization of the fact of common proprietorship opens the way for further common activities. In this way it is possible to school the people in the practice of democracy so that a welding of the various elements results and a solidarity is given to the social body which it would be impossible otherwise to accomplish.

The taxpayer is usually a part of the separate organization attempting to celebrate some festal occasion which it believes should receive recognition, therefore it is advisable that the school building should be utilized, first in the preparation of the neighborhood for the particular celebration, and second, as a place to carry out the program when deemed advisable. Such a use made of the school plant would bring all social classes closer together. At present New Year's Day is comparatively little celebrated. Washington's and Lincoln's Birthdays are celebrated in our public schools if the authorities permit. Arbor Day should be utilized to teach, not only children, but adults, the great lessons of nature that they may be applied in every-day life. One might refer to May Day and its great possibilities, Memorial Day, the day of commemoration, Flag Day and Independence Day, the preparation for which may be coördinated. Here is a rich field for the utilization of the school plant, not only during its idle hours, but during its active hours as well.

As chairman of the committee on festivals of the National Playground Association, I found one of the problems of many cities to be "How shall we bridge

the gap between the close of school and July Fourth." The use of the school plant with leaders from the neighborhoods keeping the children interested and rehearsing after the close of the school season will bridge the gap. Similarly in connection with Labor Day, a day which should be utilized to cement labor and employer rather than for demonstrations against either as is sometimes the case, the school plant should be used in connection with playgrounds and civic organizations to plan an acceptable program for this great occasion so vital to our commercial future.

Columbus Day and Thanksgiving as well as many others might be made of vital importance by a more thorough preparation participated in by all working in the common center, the public school plant. Hallowe'en might be made constructive as a festival instead of destructive as it is to-day, if the school building were opened for directed activities suitable for the boys and girls to give vent to the feelings which the day suggests, and then these feelings should be directed accordingly. I deplore legislation prohibiting an undesirable action on the part of our youth without providing a substitute. These are but a few of the ways to which our school buildings may be utilized, always, however, under careful supervision and regulation.

My belief that almost every governing body to-day will grant the use of the school plant for the many admirable uses to which it may be put if they are assured of proper supervision, and by proper supervision I mean not only as to plant but supervision which presupposes an understanding in this case of what a proper celebration of these festal occasions will mean to the future citizenship of the community, as well as ability to carry them to a successful climax on the day to be celebrated.



## CHAPTER XIV

### THE MOTION PICTURE THEATER

At one of the joint sessions of the Wisconsin Legislature of 1910-1911 was given, through the coöperation of John Collier, the Educational Secretary of the National Board of Censorship of Motion Picture Films, and of the General Film Company, with the University Extension Division, a demonstration of the possibilities of the motion picture as supplementary educational equipment and as a social magnet in the public schools. Following this demonstration, the University Extension Division equipped itself with a standard machine and, coöperating with the state anti-tuberculosis association, secured a supply of films sufficient to show the feasibility of this extension of the use of the schoolhouse. As a result of the favorable comment of men and women in all parts of the state upon this enterprise, the Dean of the Extension Division has recommended an appropriation by the next legislature sufficient to establish a state library of motion picture films. The fact that many schoolhouses are now equipped with machines promises that in at least one state the plans which Mr. Collier sets forth in the following comprehensive paper may soon begin to be realized:

Students of social welfare began to awake, two or three years ago, to the fact that a new influence is at work

among the children throughout the cities and towns of America. This influence is the motion picture show.

The motion picture is a labor saving device and is accomplishing in the theatrical field a revolution such as labor saving machinery has accomplished in other fields before now. It has cheapened the amusement commodity, thrown many people temporarily out of work, called into existence many whole trades which are contributive to the manufacture and use of motion pictures, and lengthened the reach of dramatic art in many directions.

Sociologically, the motion picture has thus far laid two great claims on attention. First, it has turned the American masses into theatergoers and has carried the richness and stimulation of the theater into millions of lives not hitherto touched by the dramatic appeal. Second, the repertory of the motion picture is so varied and the language it speaks is so universal, that it has appealed all along the range of social classes and to old and young alike in the family. From the beginning, the motion picture show has been preëminently a democratic theater and largely a family theater.

A few statistics gathered by the National Board of Censorship will illustrate these propositions. There are about 10,000 motion picture shows in the United States, charging five and ten cents for admission. The daily audience throughout the year is not less than 4,000,000, and of this number probably 400,000 are children of school age. In certain congested districts of New York a census roughly taken two years ago indicated that in different schools from fifty to eighty per cent of the children attended motion picture shows at least once a week. The estimated attendance on all American theaters other than moving picture shows is 750,000 a day, and the proportion of children is comparatively small.

We are considering the motion picture as an aid in the school, but we can best introduce our subject by remarks on the purely commercial picture theater, as it can be observed in any American city or town. Educational themes and even specific pedagogy have never been absent from the motion picture theater. Between April, 1909, and April, 1910, the board of censorship inspected about 3,000 reels of pictures. (A reel is 1,000 feet of film and provides a fifteen-minute show.) About 400 of these reels were classified by the board as educational. The educational repertory of motion pictures, as seen in American shows, covers very extensively the picturesque side of geography; many of the more spectacular modern industries, such as steel-making and mining; authentic historical episodes; agriculture, systematic play; and the physical sciences. In the last category, American audiences have recently seen several examples of microscopic motion photography exhibiting chemical action, the growth of plants, and bacterial process. The anti-tuberculosis, pure milk, anti-typhoid, and similar propagandas, have been dramatized in motion pictures, in some cases with perfect scientific accuracy, and these pictures have gone through the channels of the regular show-house to upward of 10,000,000 people in America. Already, the school which was ready to use motion pictures would find several hundred subjects available in this country, and, by going to Europe, could select from a profuse library of strictly educational subjects not yet exported to America.

The topic of the school as a motion picture theater falls under three titles: motion pictures in the school curriculum; motion pictures in school extension and social center work; motion pictures in the school budget.

*1. Motion Pictures in the School Curriculum*

The motion picture is valuable in pedagogy because it is graphic and because it is dramatic. The text-book illustration and the stereopticon found in most schools are graphic; they give body and actuality to practically all the subject matter of teaching, with the exception of pure mathematics. The motion picture does the same, and improves on the stereopticon at every point, even in its effects of artistic coloring. In addition, the motion picture provides a complete, an illusive representation, which can glide without pause over every facet of any subject it deals with, and can reproduce any movement between the vibration of a microscopic organism and the transit of a heavenly body. No human eye has ever seen the process of cell division in biology, for the inner mechanism of cell division is made visible only by the killing and staining of the cell. In motion pictures, the slides of minute successive stages in such a biological process may be assembled, and a complete reproduction may be thrown, greatly magnified, upon the screen. Similarly, the growth of a plant from seed to harvest is shown in ten minutes on the screen, not with gaps and pauses, but in a continuous process, which is accurate to a microscopic degree. The almost infinitely swift motion of an insect's wing has been dissected through photographs taken at the rate of two thousand a second. Once made, the pictures may be projected at any desired speed. In all such motion photography an actual color reproduction is now possible. So much for the graphical side of motion pictures.

In pedagogy, the dramatic quality of motion pictures is perhaps more important than their merely graphic quality. Is not the dramatic element too little provided

in our customary school curriculum and method of teaching? Drama is that form of art which deals with the human will, and is, therefore, the most important form of art, whether to the theologian, the militarist, or the teacher. The word "dramatic" is here used, not merely to describe conscious and histrionic representation, but to recall the psychological law by which motor response follows on stimulation. Drama, whose method is the method of struggle, is peculiarly a motor form of art. It directly suggests and compels action, desire, and the use of the will, whereas such art as decorative art, or any stimulation of a purely intellectual kind, issues only remotely and indirectly in action. Too much abstraction in the teaching method is likely to result, at least with the child, in a weakened capacity for action.

A motion picture dealing with first aid to the injured, or with an historical episode artfully handled, or with the activities of a model commercial house, shown before a class in commerce, does more than merely arouse interest; it impels the pupil to action, along definite and predetermined lines. This proposition, even without the help of technical psychology, is evident to common sense, and has been recognized by the child-protective agencies throughout the country in their protest against what they call the "suggestive tendency" of motion pictures in the picture theaters.

It is clear that the motion picture can be used as a time-saving, stimulating, and directing agency in the school curriculum. It must also be said that the motion picture will bring a peril with it. I have suggested that in our present school curriculum, memory work, imitation, and purely ideal presentation play too large a part. Merely to graft motion pictures into a curriculum which did not invite and require an abundance of action

—coördinated, team-work action—on the part of the pupil, would have no result other than stimulating the pupil and rousing an active disposition for which the curriculum itself would provide no expression. The outcome would be nervousness, mischief, and a definite weakening of the will. In other words, motion pictures, viewed as a dramatic art, can be recommended to any school only in such measure as that school is ready to make use of the new-old pedagogical principles of *education through action*. I believe that the principles here laid down are orthodox, but space does not allow their more thorough treatment.

A word should be said with regard to the effect of motion pictures on the eye. The eye-strain of the school child is already severe, and any increase of eye-strain should be carefully questioned, no matter what the educational advantage may be. In brief, motion pictures need not lay any especial strain on the normal eye. The eye-strain incidental to motion pictures is generally due first, to the intense white glare which accompanies their display, and second, to the oscillation of the pictures on the screen.' A very slight variation in the sequence of pictures on the film, due, perhaps, to the vibration of the camera which made the original negative, or a very slight vibration of the projecting machine, will appear as an exaggerated oscillation in the magnified picture that is thrown on the screen. In other words, to prevent oscillation a picture must be well made and carefully projected. In addition, eye-strain is caused by the flicker of motion pictures, seen when the pictures succeed each other at a slower rate than about fifteen per second. This flicker is never necessary, and the imperfect focusing of the picture, and the presence of blurs and tears, is never excusable.

The important eye-strain of motion pictures, however, is due simply to the prolonged focusing of the eye on the white screen. The eye is dazzled, and is prevented from getting that rest which, amid the ordinary surroundings of nature, it constantly secures through wandering over the gradations of light, shadow, and color. This primary form of motion picture eye-strain can be minimized in two ways: (1) The picture, if an ordinary black-and-white picture, should not be projected in complete darkness, but in an auditorium illuminated by a diffused light, almost or quite sufficient to read by. This diffused light can be secured through the simple process of screening the lighting apparatus, so that its rays will not strike directly upon the eyes of the audience or directly upon the screen. Under these conditions one may secure a perfect motion picture and avoid the dazzle which is due to the acuteness of contrast between the calcium-white screen and the surrounding darkness. (2) More important from the standpoint of eye-strain, and equally from the standpoint of art, is the use of color process in motion pictures. Color softens the glare, greatly diminishes any flicker, and gives to the eye all the relief and contrast it needs. Colored motion pictures may be obtained through the use of tinted glass slides, manipulated by the operator while he is throwing his picture. Likewise, the film itself may be tinted. The best French and Italian manufacturers of motion pictures use an actual lithographing process, with exquisite results, and this process may be seen in almost any of the regular motion picture shows throughout America. Finally, color photography has now been applied and commercialized in motion pictures. This last process is known as kinemacolor, and its exploitation in America is about to begin,



To sum up the question of eye-strain, motion pictures do undeniably injure the eye, except under conditions of the careful selection of films and of inventive diligence in their exhibition.

## *2. Motion Pictures in School Extension and Social Center Work*

Viewing the school in the aspect advocated in this volume, the value of motion pictures is assured and large. They appeal to the interests of the whole family, and they combine amusement with education, and, furthermore, they can be made to vitally combine civics with amusement. A recent film dealing with the milk industry, produced under scientific advice by a New York film company, illustrates the use of motion pictures in the dramatization and illumination of a civic problem. This picture, like other pictures dealing with the fresh-air evangelism, with many forms of sanitation, with folk dancing, the career of the immigrant, etc., etc., has gone out as purely an amusement commodity to the thousands of theaters in America.

Social workers have noted how the motion picture show attracts classes of people who do not go to the evening lecture center, the church, or the settlement. These people pay for admission, they come habitually, and they live more intensely and far more broadly during the motion-picture hour than during any other moment of their day. The motion-picture show has come to be recognized as a folk-institution, and it has seemed that commerce has gotten the better of philanthropy and of municipal good-will in this problem of helping the wage-earning millions to use their leisure time constructively and pleasurably. Has not the time now come when the school, endowed with a conscious public zeal

which the commercial show-house cannot possess, may be justly expected to equip itself with that powerful magnet which has given to the commercial show its great advantage?

### 3. *Motion Pictures in the School Budget*

As yet, in America, neither the demand nor the supply for educational motion pictures has been effectively organized. Owing to this fact, motion pictures are as yet an expensive innovation for any school, and a relatively unsatisfactory innovation. This can best be made clear by a description of the methods through which the commercial show-houses obtain their pictures.

A picture film, when completed at the factory, is sold to the "exchange" at an average price of \$100 per 1,000 feet of film. It is then rented by the day or by the week to the exhibitor. A motion picture, if carefully handled, can be run about 500 times through the machine before it begins to deteriorate. The average exhibitor repeats his program perhaps five times each day, so that the film is good for about fifty days' service, and, in practice, to the detriment of eyesight, is used much longer than fifty days. The rental price is determined by these considerations.

Under present conditions, all the exchanges in this country are organized to meet solely the demand of the commercial picture shows, whose managers use but little thought in selecting their programs, and, in fact, are generally content with what the "exchange" hands out to them day by day. The "exchange" uses to the full, at show-house prices, every film it buys, including every educational film. Because the films are going to be used repeatedly each day in the show-houses, the exchange demands a relatively high rental for them. If

the film were going to be used only once or twice a day, as would be the case in a school, the daily rental price would be less and the film would remain for a longer time in serviceable condition. The exchange, however, prefers to handle the commercial show-house business, where a film is worked to the limit and the returns are swift. As a net result, the educational institution which wishes to draw on the supply of educational films of a regular exchange has to pay show-house prices, and has to fight continually for the privilege of selecting its own pictures. Such conditions, as a rule, effectively discourage the school from attempting the use of motion pictures at all.

One of two measures is necessary, if motion pictures are to be generally used in the schools. First, an educational film exchange might be established, dealing exclusively with educational institutions and adapting its methods to their peculiar needs. Such an exchange would be a success on purely business principles. Second, a sufficiently large system of schools, or any group of institutions willing to coöperate with each other, could purchase their films outright, and use them in rotation, thus gradually building up a permanent library of motion pictures. Undoubtedly, both of these methods will be applied in the near future.

The rental cost of an educational film, under existing conditions, ranges from one dollar to eight dollars a day, and, as I have said, the service is unsatisfactory. When once the educational demand and supply become organized, films will cost from fifty cents to two dollars a day, and the service will be satisfactory. Motion picture machines can be purchased at prices ranging from \$125 to \$250. The expense of light is negligible where electricity is used, but where oxyhydric gas is used the

fuel costs nearly a dollar an hour. The salary of an operator is about \$15 a week, but any intelligent man can be trained to handle the motion picture machine, and in the school use of motion pictures special arrangements would be made.

With regard to motion pictures in the school budget, I throw out this final suggestion: That the state educational authorities, or any similar body in a given region of the country, could establish a self-supporting and self-extending motion-picture library, which would not only make possible every use of motion pictures by the schools, but would exert a stimulating influence on every show-house in the region.

## CHAPTER XV

### THE RECREATION CENTER

The use of the schoolhouse as the recreation center is to its use as the political headquarters of the deliberative organization of the voters of the district as the flesh is to the skeleton of a body. Without the skeleton the body would be a flabby thing. It might be held erect, but only by being propped up, suspended, *uplifted* from outside. The school recreation center, which has no basis in the community's political self-organization for self-expression, is necessarily a paternal, an uplift, institution, whether used by adults or children or both. As such it is essentially not a *positively* moral institution. In view of the fact that one of the great motives for opening the schoolhouses to wider use is the desire to supplant immoral dissipation by moral recreation, it is of the greatest importance to point out the truth that, without a basis in self-government, there is no positive moral training in the recreational use of the schoolhouse. It is obviously better that people spend their leisure under the enforcement of rules of conduct by men appointed by the school board in the schoolhouse than under the supervision of men appointed by the police department in the usual pool room or commercial dance hall. There are many reasons why it is better. It is very much cheaper for one thing; there is no motive for promoting the sale of cigarettes or liquor or the rental of debauch-

ing rooms in connection with the gatherings, for another; and the men appointed by the school board to do police duty have the good taste to take their hats off inside the building for a third. But, while the schoolhouse used as *merely* a recreation center is not immoral, as the privately run pleasure resort is likely to be, neither is it positively moral. It is a negatively good institution. In order to be positively good, in order to be constructively moral, it must be democratic, for positive moral development comes only with *self-expression* under *self-restraint*, that is, with democracy.

The distinction between the merely recreational use of the schoolhouse, which is analogous to the Roman circus, and the fundamentally civic use of the building, analogous to the Roman forum, was pointed out in Chapter VIII. But it is emphasized in this connection, because, next to the confusion of social "center," which is *always* a *public* institution, with social "settlement," which is *always* a *private* institution, the confusion of "social" center with "recreation" center is perhaps both most common and most harmful. Of course, in America, where the basic essential of society is its democratic sovereignty, the term "social" center is properly used only of an institution built upon a foundation of democratic expression. The social center of any community is the place where the members of that community have their headquarters of expression as a single, all-inclusive, organized society. As was pointed out in Chapter I, the polling place is the center, and all the center there is in most communities. When the schoolhouse is made the headquarters of the community organization, either for voting or for deliberation, or both, then, and only then, does it become the social center. It may then be used by the society, whose headquarters it is, as also a place

of recreation, of art exhibition, of information dissemination, and so on. These functions and activities may or may not be included in the meaning of the term in any particular case, but they are not fundamental. A home may include a library and an art gallery and a billiard room, or it may not. But it must have its basis in the union of the two adults who are primarily responsible for the welfare of the family group. Otherwise it is not a home. So a social center may include recreation facilities, et cetera, or it may not: but it must have its basis in the civic union of the adults who are primarily responsible for the welfare of the neighborhood group. There is only one more extreme misapplication of the term social center than its use to designate a schoolhouse opened merely for recreation; that is the use of the term social center in designating privately conducted dance halls.

The following survey is furnished by Clarence Arthur Perry, author of the "Wider Use of the School Plant." Its summaries, he says, "are probably under- rather than overstatements," because the manifestations of the movement "are so varied, are appearing so rapidly and in so many different localities that any quantitative statement becomes untrue a month after its utterance." While this survey is not, and of course cannot be, complete, it nevertheless clearly demonstrates that the all-important thing now is not to secure the mere opening of the schoolhouses for wider use, for this is already hastening at incredible speed, but to take care that the institution thus developed is not, to use the term of Superintendent Dyer, "un-American."

Mr. Perry's survey is followed by a detailed statement, furnished by Dr. Edward W. Stitt, who, as District Superintendent of Schools, has charge of the recreation



centers in New York City, where this use of the school-houses is most extensive.

Mr. Perry writes:

The most conspicuous progress in the socialization of school property has occurred in that phase of it which is denoted by the evening recreation center. Two years ago there were only fifteen cities in which any of the schoolhouses were used as winter play centers under the direction of *paid workers*. During the past season that number was increased to forty-three, and the total number of school buildings in the cities where play leaders were employed for evening activities was one hundred and sixty-nine.

Reports from thirteen cities showed an expenditure of \$117,631 for the maintenance of recreation centers during the season of 1911-12. Of this amount \$100,000 was reported by New York City, where forty-eight centers were operated. In that city five years ago the nightly attendance at the evening recreation centers averaged over 9,500. During the season just passed the average nightly attendance was over 17,500.

Chicago, which began two years ago with only two public school recreation centers, supported thirteen during the winter of 1911-12. The recreational work which has been carried on for a number of years in the Philadelphia schools by the Home and School League and its affiliated organizations has so thoroughly demonstrated the wisdom of community provision for a larger play life that the superintendent of schools in his last annual report has recommended that the work be placed under the control of the board of public education.

In Boston the Woman's Municipal League has established a popular neighborhood center in the East Boston

High School. The undertaking was directed by a couple of skilled social workers who settled in the district and spent three months in investigating and making acquaintances before opening the center. Intensive club work has been the leading characteristic of this interesting experiment which attained such a pronounced success that next year it is to be conducted, along with four new centers, by the school committee.

In St. Louis the first definite experiment in the social use of the public schoolhouse has been made by the Neighborhood Association. It rented Franklin School from the board of education and used it as a meeting place for the clubs and the carrying on of its various recreational and social activities.

Milwaukee, through a referendum, has authorized its board of school directors to levy a two-tenths of a mill tax for social and recreation center work, which will yield next year about \$88,000. A director and staff have been employed to start this work.

The Massachusetts state legislature during the past year enacted a law authorizing the use of public school property in Boston for social, civic and other purposes. As the result of an agitation for social centers which had been waged in Washington, a bill was introduced in the United States Senate authorizing the board of education to use public school buildings as centers of recreation and for other supplementary educational purposes.

In many cities organized agitations are being carried on to secure the use of school buildings for recreation center work. In Duluth this is being urged by the board of public welfare. In Youngstown, Ohio, over \$7,000 was raised in a campaign for playgrounds and recreation centers which was carried on by the local

playground association. In Cincinnati, where the schoolhouses have been open for evening gymnasium classes for years, the proposition of a more thorough expansion of the social center idea is being vigorously advocated. The Evanston Welfare Association of that city made a social survey of one of the districts and thereby developed facts which make a strong argument for providing wholesome recreation in public school buildings.

The men's club of one of the large churches of Springfield, Massachusetts, has secured the use of one of the public schools for neighborhood center work. In Paterson, New Jersey, the Woman's College Club has agitated the subject of opening the schools in that city. The Social Service Council of Portland, Oregon, representing twenty-five local philanthropic organizations, is also seeking the opening of the public school buildings as substitutes for the dance halls.

The above instances are simply representative of the organizations and their methods; they do not constitute, by any means, a complete record of all the bodies which are working to further this movement. The superintendents of some fifty cities other than those included in the foregoing summaries reported schoolhouses which were locally known as "recreation or social centers"; and although on closer inspection of their reports it appears that many of these buildings were used only for monthly parent-teacher meetings or bi-monthly entertainments, nevertheless the fact of their being reported is indicative of the new attitude of school officials respecting the recreational use of school property.

These fifty do not embrace, even approximately, all of the cities in which incipient centers are developing. The increasingly frequent desire to extend the privileges of the school building for recreational purposes

even when the board's funds do not permit organized activities is well illustrated by an extract from the report of a superintendent in the far west: "Our schoolhouses have been used as social centers by permitting the pupils in the respective grades, in charge of their teacher, to have little parties. Also, the teachers of the respective schools have held social gatherings at which the teachers of the city have been invited, together with other persons interested in educational work. Schoolhouses were allowed to be used, free of all cost, by outside organizations for consistent purposes. Parents' meetings were held in all the schools, closing with some exercises in which the pupils take part. We hope to do more of this the coming year."

Since many of the parent-teacher associations have recreational and entertaining features upon their programs, they cannot be overlooked in this survey. Some notion of the numerousness of these associations can be gained from the fact that the National Congress of Mothers, with which the majority of them are affiliated, has branches in over thirty states, the number of local groups making up the state bodies ranging from twenty to one hundred and seventy.

The terrible facts regarding the extent and causes of the social evil as revealed by the report of the Chicago Vice Commission have given a new impetus to the movement of providing substitutes for the vicious dance hall. In the effort to find a place where young men and women may come together in a social way under wholesome auspices, welfare workers are turning more and more to the public schools. In New York City the opportunity for social dancing was afforded during the past season in over a dozen of the recreation centers. In Jersey City the school extension committee has been

instrumental in opening three of the public schools for social dancing one night a week. From the outset the school board furnished heat, light, and janitor service, and after the work won the approval of the community it employed a trained supervisor to direct it, retaining the extension committee in an advisory capacity. In a dozen or so other cities the question of social dancing in the public schools is being very actively discussed.

In a large number of cities school boards are preparing for this general community use of the schoolhouse by providing suitable auditoriums in all of their new ward buildings. In Oklahoma a country school teacher in Cleveland County has been arranging lectures and entertainments in the rural schools. Many of them have had lyceum courses of from two to six numbers, and sometimes as many as twelve meetings are held simultaneously in one county.

In Brooklyn, New York, a small committee of citizens during the past season secured the Commercial High School for a series of free concerts and lectures on social and civic subjects on Sunday evenings. The course included ten concerts given by high-class quartettes and other well-known musicians. These alternated with the lectures by persons prominently identified with various kinds of social work. The attendance at the first four concerts averaged 1,500 people and the attendance at the lectures ran from 400 to 800.

The superintendent of schools in Alma, Kansas, has promoted public meetings among the citizens of the school district. The meetings were held sometimes in the afternoon, but more often in the evening, and musical features enlivened the evening entertainment. The school children addressed and carried printed invitations to their parents, and others were sent through the mail. The discussions

were focused upon matters of common community interest. Starting from the standpoint of sentiments that already existed, the attention of the auditors was gradually directed to new viewpoints and new ways of co-operating for community betterment. Among the topics discussed were school athletics, musical instruction in the grades, school libraries, and student government. As the result of one meeting the purchase of a tract of land for athletics and agriculture was authorized. Social hygiene was the subject on one of the discussions, and a public sentiment is now developing that will permit the giving of systematic instruction in eugenics and wholesome sex hygiene.

The United States Bureau of Education is now sending out bulletins describing the progress of social and recreation center work throughout the country. The social service commissions of a number of the leading religious denominations are now promoting the wider use of the school plant. The Social Service Committee of the New York Federation of Churches and Christian Organizations passed the following resolutions: "That the community should regard the school building as its property, to be turned to every possible community use. That the sense of the community should commend the work already done and demand the further extension of the use of the school buildings, outside of school hours, until the needs of the city be more fully met as regards summer vacation schools, supervised playgrounds, and evening recreation centers for physical, social, literary and other activities of young people and adults. That the use of school buildings for polling places and other civic activities be urged as far as practicable."

In connection with the Men and Religion Forward Movement during the past winter, the wider use idea

was advocated in some seventy conferences in the leading cities of the country. Each of these meetings was attended by representatives of nearby cities and towns, so that the social use of school buildings was in that way brought to the attention of leaders in the religious life of a large number of communities throughout the country.

Dr. Stitt writes :

Nothing is more remarkable in the growth of our great nation than the continued tendency of the people to dwell in cities. This gradual urbanization of our population has been especially noticeable in the last half century. "In 1860," declares Lawrence Veiller in his recently published book on Housing Reform, "the percentage of urban population was 16.1. In 1900, it had increased to 33.1. The United States census for this year will show, it is estimated, that the urban population of the entire country is fifty per cent." All the Census figures thus far published confirm the above statement. Almost all the gains in population have been made in the cities, and there has been a gradual shifting of the population from the villages and outlying districts of the country to the crowded cities.

This enormous urban development has gradually received the close attention of our modern sociologists. The narrow confines of so many crowded tenements, the absence of any satisfactory court-yards in most apartments, and the fact that so many of the streets and avenues are apparently the permanent property of electric cars and automobiles, prevent the city boy and girl from enjoying any of the free, outdoor sports which are the right and heritage of every country child. It therefore becomes the duty of every municipality to provide



playgrounds for the children who live in the crowded sections of our great cities. It is also necessary to care for the young men and women who are engaged in their various occupations during the day, and crave some form of recreative activity at night.

New York City has given careful consideration to the claims of the large army of workers whose daily toil is so heavy that they are physically and mentally too tired at night to attend evening schools, and whose humble lodgings, located in the congested sections, furnish no opportunity for home amusements. The schoolhouses are the proper places in which to provide satisfactory recreative facilities for the wage-earners who are sixteen years old or over.

Our city has been especially fortunate in having as its school architect superintendent, C. B. J. Snyder, who has devised a structure called the "H" school. It is especially adapted for school purposes by day, and because of the high ceilings of the first story in which the playground is located, it is admirably adapted for gymnasium purposes at night. The separate court-yards formed by the wings of the building also lend themselves to recreative activities. These modern buildings have an abundant supply of electric lights, as proper illumination is one of the greatest factors in the success of the movement.

There are now thirty-eight different recreation centers established in the five boroughs making up this great metropolis. Five of the centers located in outlying portions of the city, and in places in which the congestion of population is not so great are open only two nights per week. The others are open every night except Sunday, from 7.30 to 10 P. M. The sessions commence in October, and usually close at the end of May.

There are several different departments to the recreation centers, all under the direction of a principal who is expected to be a trained gymnast, as well as a lover of humanity, and therefore desirous of raising the social and ethical standards of those who attend the center.

Great importance is properly placed upon the athletic activities. The first floor of our modern buildings makes a very satisfactory gymnasium. It is well heated for use during the cold weather, and the ceilings are made sufficiently high to provide excellent ventilation, and also permit the installation of basket-ball courts. There is provided a satisfactory amount of gymnastic material, including the buck, horse, parallel bars, horizontal bar, jumping-standard, dumb-bells and Indian clubs, so that the apparatus is sufficiently extensive to permit many forms of physical training. Indoor base-ball, hand-ball, quoits, ring-toss, and other such games are provided, the only limitations being our financial disability, and the lack of proper accommodations as regards floor-space or playing area. In all the work directed by the teacher of gymnastics, no attempt is made to create star athletes or trained acrobats. The effort has been rather to develop young men of good physique and to teach them how to use the various kinds of apparatus with which the gymnasium is equipped. They are also encouraged to take part in the organized games, and to look upon the physical side of the recreation center as being of great importance. To encourage competition and to stimulate the natural spirit of rivalry, each center frequently has a series of athletic contests including relay-races, potato-races, obstacle-races, dashes and other running races, as well as the standing and broad jumps. Prizes are offered by the various clubs, and these open meetings are largely attended by parents and friends

of the members. At the end of the year, a union athletic meet of all the centers has been held in one of the largest armories, and several thousand people gathered to witness the contests. Gold, silver and bronze medals are awarded to the successful competitors, and also a handsome trophy to the center which wins the highest number of points in all the contests.

Some of the buildings used for recreation centers are equipped with shower-baths, and capable attendants are provided by the board of education to supervise the bathing. These baths are very essential for many young men and women who have not proper bathing facilities in their homes. It is also a great attraction to the center to be provided with baths so that those who have been taking severe physical exercise, or who have been playing a strenuous game of basket-ball or hand-ball, may have a chance to get a cool shower bath before venturing out into the cool night air. One of our centers is located in the High School of Commerce which is fortunate enough to have a pool 42x21 feet, and a competent teacher gives instruction in swimming. This is a luxury which cannot be afforded in many buildings. It is, however, of great importance that every building used as a recreation center should be equipped with several shower-baths.

A second branch of the recreative activity is provided in the game-room and library. Here such quiet games as checkers, chess, dominoes, parchesi, and so forth, are provided, and also such card-games as battles, authors, and various historical and geographical games. Frequent tournaments are held in checkers and chess. Last winter in one of our east side centers our chess-club tied the chess-club of New York University in a series of games. In the library are provided a number of the leading

magazines, so that the young men and women may keep abreast with current literature. In some of the centers, the teachers and some of those in attendance purchase and keep on file two or three evening newspapers. Each center is also furnished with fifty volumes from the New York Public Library, including not only books of fiction, but also of art, history, and general literature. These books may be read in the center, or by special permission may be taken home by the reader.

The most important educational department of the recreation center is found in the clubs. Sometimes twenty, thirty and even more have been organized in a single center. The board of education provides a club director, who assists in the organization of these clubs, trains the members in parliamentary procedure, and aids in the preparation of the weekly literary program of recitations, dialogues and debates. Some of the clubs are specially organized as athletic clubs, and produce basket-ball teams of exceptional ability. Other clubs are more or less social in their nature, and still others have a purely literary aim. Many clubs embrace all three features. The principals always strive to persuade all the club members to take some systematic training in the gymnasium.

The clubs have stated nights of meeting, and are governed by duly elected officers of their own selection. Elections are always decided by ballot, and the club members obtain practical demonstration of all the essential principles of ordinary parliamentary practice in their spirited meetings. Some of the clubs are organized to give simple dramatic performances, and very creditable work has been attempted along this line. The staging of the plays is necessarily attended with many mechanical difficulties, and the young actors are limited to costumes,

which they may hire or borrow, or else ingeniously manufacture from clothes loaned for the purpose. The public performances of the plays are very largely attended, the audience frequently numbering a thousand or over.

Some of the clubs are organized to encourage civic pride. One of the most successful of these is the Maxwell Civic League, named in honor of the city superintendent, William H. Maxwell, who has done so much to develop, broaden, and encourage the work of the recreation centers. This club recently held an open meeting at which about twelve hundred persons were present. The program consisted of many interesting numbers, including a session of a pseudo board of estimate and apportionment, a stereopticon lecture on the work of the street cleaning department, and an address by myself on the privileges so freely afforded by the board of education. A school orchestra furnished the music, and a glee-club of young ladies sang several selections. The average age of the immense audience was about twenty years, and all left at the end of the instructive exercises with nobler ideals of citizenship, a broader knowledge of proper sanitary laws, and a more appreciative love for the city which furnished so many recreative and educational advantages.

In most of the recreation centers, one or more study-rooms have been established. Here the children of the day schools who have not proper home advantages as regards desks, light, quiet, and other necessary adjuncts of a proper place for study, gather in well-lit and comfortable rooms, where they have the assistance of teachers of special ability and wide experience. Each pupil is provided with an attendance card admitting him or her to the study-room privileges. This card is properly punched by the teacher in charge, so that the parents

may know the child has been present at the center, and has not been running the streets at night. Very few of the children attending these classes fail in their school work, and, as a rule, they are regularly promoted at the end of the term. In one center, out of two hundred children who attended the study-room, all but one were sent ahead at the last general promotion.

In several of the recreation centers for girls and women, there have been organized very successful mixed dancing classes. The principals in charge of these centers have been requested to use especial vigilance, so that all proper precautions have been taken that no criticism could in any way be fairly directed against the plan of bringing young men and women together once a week for a social dancing period. The membership on the part of the young men has been restricted to those who were members in good standing in clubs in the neighboring male center. Cards of membership, non-transferable, are issued, signed by the principal of the center at which the young men are regular attendants. The woman principal in charge of the center at which the mixed dancing class meets acts as a sort of membership committee, and has the right to refuse admission to any young man whom she does not consider a desirable member, or to request his immediate withdrawal any time his actions or manners are not in every respect satisfactory.

The first part of the evening is devoted to systematic instruction, so that the beginners, especially among the young men, may be encouraged to learn to dance. No attempt is made to develop dancers of extraordinary ability. The young men who are naturally awkward and clumsy are helped most of all, as the desire is to enable as large a number as possible to learn the essentials



of dancing. It has been astonishing to note the improvement in grace, courtesy, and manly dignity made by the young men. Much attention has been paid to the matter of personal cleanliness and correct dress, so that clean collars, polished shoes, and the little refinements of polite society soon came to be recognized by all.

In most of the mixed dancing classes, a special social evening is held once a week, to which each member is privileged to invite one friend. The attendance at the various classes varies from sixty to two hundred. No attempt, however, has been made to enlarge the membership to too great an extent. The fact that the number is restricted adds to the value of the privilege, and makes those selected esteem the honor so highly that all are more than willing to maintain a high standard of membership. As a rule, the music consists of piano and violin, though occasionally one or two other pieces are added. The board of education furnishes the piano and pianist. The other music is paid for by the club members from the money collected as dues. For special occasions, orders of dancing are provided, and the young men are taught the ordinary usages of society regarding engagements to dance.

There are many improvements which could be made in the further usefulness of recreation centers. Generally these require the expenditure of additional money, more than most municipalities will be willing to pay. The following are suggested as being some of the more important recommendations:

(1) It is hardly fair to limit the advantages of recreation centers to the poorest sections of a city. In some neighborhoods where persons in moderate circumstances live the inroads of moving-picture shows, cheap theaters,



and the lower order of vaudeville performances need to be met by the uplifting influences of recreation centers.

(2) Each school building used for a recreation center should have a large electric sign outside the building, so that the passers-by may have their attention attracted by the opportunities afforded by the centers.

(3) Glee-clubs and choral societies should be organized under proper musical direction. The services of the supervisors and special teachers of music in the day schools will be very helpful. After some instruction has been given, some of the simple oratorios and cantatas may be attempted at a union concert of the various musical clubs of the centers.

(4) At least once or twice a week mothers' clubs should meet in the cooking-room of the school, and very practical lessons in plain cooking and economic house-keeping should be given. If more mothers knew how to make wholesome soups, bread and rolls, cook potatoes properly, broil steaks and chops, and prepare other simple home dishes, the homes of many workingmen could be made much happier, and some of the saloon problems would be solved.

(5) Classes in simple sewing, patching, darning, and other such necessary details of the clothes question would help to solve the problem of the poor as to how to live within their means.

(6) Nurses could give practical lessons once a week upon such important topics as the following: Proper food for infants; care of the sick; ventilation of bedrooms; care of the teeth; cleanliness of the home; variety of food; first aid to the injured; importance of bathing.

(7) Civil service classes for those wishing to join the fire and police forces should be organized. The

members can secure their preparation for the physical tests in the gymnasium. Once a week, a teacher can be assigned to act as a helper in the work necessary for the educational tests.

Theodore Roosevelt recently said of the playgrounds: "They are the greatest civic achievement the world has ever known." Recreation centers are really the playgrounds of our adults. Effectively equipped and wisely directed, they can be made of the highest value in the conservation of the youth of our city, who are to be the citizens of the future, and upon whose training and patriotism the welfare of our country depends.

## CHAPTER XVI

### THE VOCATION CENTER AND EMPLOYMENT BUREAU

The argument of Mrs. Annie L. Diggs in her recent book, "Bed Rock," that a large unemployed class is as inimical to the welfare of the country as a large illiterate class and that the furnishing of vocational guidance and information regarding employment, along with, and as a part of the educational system, is immediately necessary, points the importance of this chapter. The leaders in the movement for the development of the use of the schoolhouse as a vocation center and employment bureau in this country are Mr. Meyer Bloomfield, director of the Vocation Bureau of Boston, and Dr. John R. Commons, of the Wisconsin Industrial Commission. In his paper Mr. Bloomfield discusses mainly the vocational service of the evening school. His argument is, therefore, chiefly applicable to urban conditions. The plan which Dr. Commons sets forth contemplates the use of rural as well as city schoolhouses as branches of a general system of employment offices. In several places it has been found that the librarian in the schoolhouse branch library is the officer best situated to assume charge of the neighborhood employment bureau.

Mr. Bloomfield writes:

The movements for vocational education and for vocational guidance, steadily gaining in nation-wide inter-

est, promise in their relation to the larger uses of the school plant a unique field of personal and social service. An age like ours, sensitive to social waste in unemployment, misemployment, and exploited childhood; a public, keener for the better social investment of youth in commerce and industry, demand of the school, that traditional center of light and inspiration, a closer relationship with the world of work and its problems.

Abundant evidence is at hand of the evils during the critical transition from school-life to working-life. Reports such as those of the Royal Commission on the Poor Laws, published in England two years ago, and the studies of child-helping societies in this country, confirm the conviction of all thoughtful observers that the community has failed thus far to bridge the gap between school and the occupations.

The school influence abruptly terminates when tens of thousands of fourteen-year-old boys and girls in this country get their working certificate and are "pitchforked into the working world," as Charles Booth has put it. At no time in their lives is the social protection of the school and the community more needed for these children. At no other period does guidance and training prove more fruitful. The period of adolescence is the moral crucible of youth. The schoolhouse has here a strategic opportunity of coöperating with the home and the occupation in order to tide over that part of one's lifetime wherein efficiency or inefficiency develops.

Unquestionably many a devoted teacher has started an individual boy or girl on a career of usefulness and success. The complex age we live in, however, requires, if we do justice to the masses as well as to the individuals, that the sympathy and initiative of the teachers be supplemented by a thorough-going organized service of

vocational training and vocational guidance. For the multitude of fourteen-year-old children who drop out of school never again to study anywhere, a schoolhouse must be so organized as to reach them with its influence and its service. Until such time, therefore, as a more enlightened public sentiment shall raise the compulsory school age of childhood, and until socially minded employers realize the wastefulness of employing young people at all, there is a work of conservation which the common school must energetically undertake.

Broadly speaking, all education aims to develop the capacity for living and for a livelihood. Home-making, citizenship, and bread-winning are phases, the effective union of which make the man and the woman. Vocational education is becoming a part of the public school system, and in communities educationally progressive continuation schools are being started so that work and a fundamental training for work go together. Before long legislation will enforce a short working day for all minors who will be obliged to receive instruction with wage-earning.

Underlying all this preparation for life and a livelihood is the necessity of studying the individual aptitudes and circumstances of each child and of the occupations which the children may to their best advantage engage in. Such a study demands time and resources, and to give counsel based on such study requires exceptional insight, sympathy, and skill. The present day demands this specialized service for the protection of young people.

Most boys and girls do not choose their life-work; nor are they prepared for it. They find the first job to hand—whichever job pays the most, that is the one scrambled for. Parents are too busy and uninformed to

guide their children intelligently. Teachers, however kindly, cannot be expected to know the facts about the vocations, their dangers, advantages, disadvantages, and what they hold out to those they employ. It so happens that most "blind alley" occupations pay young people oftentimes twice the wages of the occupations which are educative and in which progress is possible. The doffer boys of a cotton-mill receive much more than machinists' apprentices, or the boys in an architect's office. Indeed, the latter are often glad for the sake of the training they receive to work for nothing. The doffer boy can never get more wages, and at seventeen or eighteen years of age he is out on the street unfitted for any useful occupation. There are many parents who would gladly make even more sacrifice than they now do in order to give their children a good start in life, but no one is at hand to tell them about the vocations, and to point out to them what must inevitably befall their children in this or that occupation. Hence the necessity of vocational counselors in connection with the public school.

The Boston School Department, awakened to the situation, has joined hands with the Vocation Bureau—a work maintained by public-spirited men and women to study the occupations in their relations to young workers—and, as a result, vocational advisers have been appointed in every school in Boston. These advisers are studying the employments open to young people, and some of them are preparing themselves as for a new profession. Harvard University has recognized the need of fitting teachers as vocational counselors, and a beginning was made in the Harvard Summer School of 1911 by means of a course on Vocational Guidance. The wider use of the school buildings is naturally

associated with its use outside of the regular day school world. For wage-earners it is the evening school enlargement we have in mind, and, consequently, the need is for an evening program that shall minister to the vocational problems of young wage-earners. Unfortunately, the night school is the poor relation of the school system. Whatever is left over from the heavy and growing demands of the insufficiently maintained day school determines the length of the evening school period and its activities. But as the social service which the night school can render is better understood, the public will come to regard the night school budget as a fixed charge which it cannot safely cut.

Dealing as it does with wage-earners, young and old, the night school has a singular opportunity of providing instruction intended to quicken what President Eliot has called the "life-career-motive." The night-school service must be saturated with the vocational purpose, else it is a failure. The English taught to foreigners must be practical enough to serve them as peddlers, laborers, and artisans; the geography must point out the boundaries of states, not only in terms of hills and rivers, but also in those of mines and mills and other wage-earning resources. In other words, the culture of the evening school must not be academic, and remote, but real, vital, and significant. It is a dangerous snobbishness which regards the utilitarian view of education as inferior and unworthy. There is a difference between the practical and the sordid. All that the vocational idea aims for is to make men and women effectively self-supporting citizens, respecting the producer and despising the parasite.

A large number of the night school pupils, particularly the young, are in an unstable condition of employment,



They change frequently and they are wholly without guidance. This continual change makes for demoralization quite as often as for betterment. The night school which ties up its instruction with the vocational problems of its students will succeed far beyond any of the present type.

The following program is therefore suggested for the use of the night school as a vocational guidance center, the purpose being to develop happier and more efficient workers. In the first place, vocational record-cards should be kept of every pupil showing what their occupations are now and what they have been, both here, and, in the case of the immigrants, abroad. The educational history of each student should also be recorded. These cards must be treated as live material and not as mere statistics. Someone, preferably a specially designated vocational counselor in that school, must use the facts disclosed by the record-cards as a basis for organizing appropriate vocational and social service. In the first place, the counselor should have a personal interview with each pupil to ascertain what his present problems are. On the one hand there will be those found who can be persuaded to take courses that will advance them in their present employment; then there is another and very large group whose preparation may be started for another occupation. These plans can be pursued without encroaching upon the fundamental work of the regular evening school. Indeed, the pupils will be found eager to spend more time in school and to attend more regularly because of the vocational opportunities offered.

An evening school physician is needed as a medical adviser. Every pupil should be given the opportunity to consult this physician, at least once during the school year, about his physical condition, and the classes should

be addressed on topics dealing with industrial hygiene and occupational diseases. No greater service than this could be rendered to the pupils and to the community, for among the pupils are painters and others whose work subjects them to the risk of lead-poisoning, and there are thousands of others who are in dust-breathing employments. The prevention of tuberculosis must be a reiterated topic of discussion. Indeed, the vocational aim of the night school makes it essentially a school of health, for health is efficiency.

A large proportion of night school pupils are immigrants. The removal and distribution of the new Americans out of the congested tenement district will be hastened by such information as to opportunities of employment outside of their localities as will enable these thoughtful students to work out their own vocational salvation. The night school must be not only a center of information about the trades and professions, the rural as well as the urban occupations, but must have also the closest affiliation with the public and the private educational agencies which offer technical courses to wage-earners. And in communities where such facilities are lacking the vocational adviser must work for their establishment.

It is the duty and the privilege of the evening school vocational adviser to discover and help develop the talent and the special capacities among the various pupils, and having done so to connect them with their appropriate opportunities. Some pupils are book-dull but tool-bright. The adviser should find the facilities for testing the pupils in as many ways as possible in order fairly to judge of their endowments.

Simple talks and debates can be organized in the night school dealing with the occupations and their relative

merits. Some years ago there was a series of discussions at the Civic Service House, Boston, dealing with peddling, the trades, the professions, farm life and city life. Adult immigrants struggling for a livelihood took part in these discussions and contributed information, criticism and suggestions of greatest value.

To make the vocational service of the night school real and attractive it is necessary for the relief of the tired brains and bodies that come for instruction to combine wholesome amusement with vocational information. Men, women and children crowd the store windows where a demonstration is in progress. It may be a tobacco store where a skillful carver is transforming a lump of meerschaum, a cutlery shop where an ingenious whittler is exhibiting the magic of a sharp knife deftly handled, or even a humble but immaculate eating-place with its show of well-made flap-jacks. People like to see things done. They learn by seeing them done just as they learn by doing them. The night school should provide for vocational demonstration. Moving pictures and lantern slides can be used for vocational instruction. An educational moving-picture show in a night school would crowd its largest hall. That alone would effectively compete with the unwholesome amusements of the night school neighborhoods. We have here a large and undeveloped field of instruction and social service.

The wider uses of the school building is an accepted proposition by all thoughtful people. The ordinary night school as an instrument for vocational efficiency is not so well understood. In the day schools we shall see vocational counselors helping more and more children to prolong their school life and to start their bread-winning career intelligently. The large night school population of this country must likewise be taken into account

in our social development of the school plan. The social worker, the teacher, and the vocational adviser dealing with these earnest, self-supporting students have before them a vast opportunity for contribution to the public good. Their particular privilege it is to bring work and school into closer relations, to help make life and a livelihood one in the service of democracy.

Dr. Commons writes:

What is an employment office and what are its functions? A place where buyer and seller of labor may meet with least difficulty and least loss of time. This function is now performed by private agencies and newspapers. They fail of their complete purpose because there are many of them and each is small. The more places to look for work the more likely that man and job will miss each other. "Don't fly around looking for a job," says a newspaper. "Advertise!" But without one central agency, workmen must do this.

The function of an employment office is best expressed by the British term "labor exchange." Exchange implies a market. It is an organization of the labor market, just as the stock market, the cotton market, the wheat market are organized.

Why is an employment office needed? Employers are constantly discharging and hiring laborers. Workmen are constantly looking for jobs. One firm in Milwaukee hires from 60 to 240 men a week. About ten per cent of all those employed change places because of seasonal work. Four out of every ten workmen have to look for work at least once a year. There is need of an organized market because, without such an exchange, each factory and each district of a city tends to

become a market. Each has its reserve labor force ready to work when needed. Many markets tend to increase the number of unemployed. Lack of organization causes maladjustment. "Manless job" and "jobless man" do not meet and maladjustment of two kinds occurs. First, is an oversupply of labor in one place and lack of labor in another. Second, some occupations, particularly those of unskilled laborers, are greatly over-supplied while many skilled occupations have not enough men.

What is the ideal organization of the labor market? Ideal organization would be national. One unified national labor exchange would reduce idleness by having a single market so that over-supply anywhere could be shifted to meet demand anywhere else. At present, each manufacturer and each district is interested in having idle workmen in the immediate neighborhood ready to go to work when they are needed. But as it is impossible to get national action at once, we must begin with state action.

What is the ideal labor market of a state?

- (a) Free employment offices maintained by the state.
- (b) Free employment offices maintained by local committees. \*
- (c) Private agencies regulated by state.
- (d) Correspondents in various cities and industries.
- (e) Reports from all to a central clearing house.
- (f) Periodical bulletin of the labor market.

What is the ideal for a city?

- (a) Central office in the business center.
- (b) Branches in various residence districts.
- (c) The school as a branch of the employment bureau.

If each schoolhouse has a director of its social center service, he could be supplied with blanks from the main employment office. A workman, by going to the

school nearest his house to register, could be immediately connected with the whole organized labor market of the state. The fact that he is out of a job and the kind of work he can do will be immediately known at the city exchange and in a day the central clearing house will know. If a man of his trade qualifications is wanted anywhere in the city, the director of the social center will be able to inform him after a talk with the central office in the city. If there is a place for him anywhere in the state, it will be known to him in the course of a few days. No discouraging tramping of city streets, no spending of precious pennies for car fare or newspapers or as fees to private agents. This will tend to remove maladjustment of place. It is of use particularly to the immigrant and the ignorant. It would tend to distribute population by removing congestion in certain places.

Maladjustment of occupation belongs to the vocational bureau. The school, as a branch of the children's department of the employment office, will tend to remove this kind of maladjustment. British figures show that while about 75 per cent of applications for work cannot be filled, 40 per cent of the jobs could not be filled. How to direct some of the 75 per cent excess so as to reduce the 40 per cent lack is the problem of the school. Records of children's aptitudes should be kept in school. Teachers can best tell what the child is good for. The children's department of a free employment office has special blanks for children. These can be filled out in the schools with the aid and advice of teachers. The employment office has the best records of desirable trades, those which are growing. Children are thus directed into the most promising occupations. Vocational training in public schools and trade schools need employ-



ment offices to connect children with the business world. The schoolhouse as a branch of the organized state labor market meets this need. Thus the free employment office connects up with the vocational bureau and its special juvenile advisory committee of employers, employees and educators to encourage apprenticeship, to visit parents and child and to encourage the boy to stick to trades and not to jump into "blind alley" employments.

How to induce school teachers and principals to cooperate in this great agency is a matter that can be worked out when once its importance is understood. The Industrial Commission is meeting with success in enlisting municipal authorities and local associations of manufacturers in supporting financially and supervising the employment offices. It has arranged with a few country bankers to act as agents for their localities. With a broadening idea of the school as a social center and the employment of principals who are wide awake and alive to their social opportunities, the commission could enlist them as a part in a comprehensive scheme for the state. Such men should, of course, receive extra compensation, not only for this, but also for other work outside the usual pedagogical lines. The policy of the Industrial Commission, and the one that will make local coöperation most effective, indicates that these local expenses should be met by the local authorities, while the state meets the general expenses and the salaries of those in the larger offices who are required to give their entire time to the work.



## CHAPTER XVII

### THE PUBLIC HEALTH OFFICE

"Gentlemen, some of us are beginning to feel that to point out the causes of the diseases and defects of the school children is only going half the distance. We are becoming convinced that the true method is to work for the removal of the conditions which permit these causes to become operative."

Thus spoke Dr. George B. Young, Commissioner of Health of Chicago, before the First National Conference on Social Center Development. His paper, which has been printed as a bulletin by the Wisconsin University Extension Division, points out the necessity of democratically founded and complete social center development in order to deal with the social maladjustments of which individual disease is coming to be recognized as, in part at least, merely a symptom.

In the two papers which follow, the one by Dr. George W. Goler, Health Commissioner of Rochester, the other by Dr. Oakley W. Norton, of the same city, the development of the use of the schoolhouse as a health and dental office is considered chiefly from the point of view of the child. Community self-service through the coöperative employment of neighborhood health or dental service has only begun, but this is a development to be expected, and for reasons set forth in Dr. Goler's paper the school-

houses furnish the convenient places for this neighborhood branching of the public health service.

Dr. Goler writes:

It is the duty of the community to provide that every child shall be physically and mentally well born; and for this purpose the city must provide that midwifery training shall be thorough; that midwives, if permitted to practise at all, shall have the same physiological obstetric training as that given to medical students for the degree of Medical Doctor. Midwives and physicians both must be thoroughly grounded in hygiene of the child, so as to be able to teach both expectant mothers and the mothers of the babies already born how to care for their children. This training should also include work in sex hygiene so that syphilis and gonorrhea, those scourges of the race, may in a measure be lessened. Births must be very carefully reported. Every death among children must be looked up in the birth register, and if the birth of the child has not been reported the attendant should be dealt with according to law. Inspectors and nurses visiting a family for any cause should inquire as to the obstetric attendant of every child in the family under two years of age, and with the name of the attendant and the name of the father return these data to the health officer for comparison with the birth records. That the transmission of ophthalmia neonatorum may be caused to disappear, preventive treatment in the case of every child born should be made by law a part of the duty of every obstetric attendant.

To insure the normal physical development of school children, a medical school inspector, who shall be the district physician, should be attached to every school, whose duty it should be to determine not alone the freedom

of the child from transmissible diseases, but who shall be responsible for, and who shall make, a physical inspection, and later as the plan develops a more detailed examination. Record should be made of the relations of height to weight for age; the measure of all the sense developments by instruments of precision; a nose and throat formula, showing the number and location of nose and throat obstructions; the condition of the circulatory and respiratory apparatus; and a vaccinating formula, showing when and how many vaccine scars the child exhibits. These data should be annually registered on a card that shall accompany the child from grade to grade or from school to school, the card along with the baptismal and school certificate to be used as a prerequisite for permission to go to work.

In every school there must be a school dentist with chair and dental equipment, who shall teach the hygiene of the mouth, the relation between infantile disease—diphtheria, scarlet fever, measles and whooping cough—and the decay of the teeth; who shall make an annual dental formula exhibiting the state of the child's dentition on entering school, and, by careful inspection, advise and teach the child how to preserve the teeth.

For the purpose of bringing the school and home into closer relation, every school should have its nurse, who should be the assistant to the school physician. The nurse should not occupy her time altogether in rendering assistance to the doctor in the school, but should visit the homes of the pupils wherever and whenever necessary to render assistance, and give advice to mothers relating to the preservation of the health of the child.

Out of the development of this preliminary work there must be established in every school a laboratory of hygiene for the study of these problems relating to

the normal health and development of the well child. Not only must the sense apparatus of the child be studied and recorded in these laboratories, but many questions relating to child physiology and psychology must be opened for inquiry, among them that great question of child fatigue.

When these problems have received the attention they deserve, physical training and instruction in hygiene will be made a part of the work in every school. Bathing, clothing, the care of eyes, ears, nose, throat, teeth, and skin will be made subjects of instruction in every school. The shower, the plunge, the gymnasium and gymnastic indoor and outdoor games will have a place in every school under the direction of a physical instructor. To provide for the physical well-being of the people generally by securing hygienic conditions in the home, we will no longer permit to exist without care and education that unfilled gap in child life between birth and the time the child attends school, but we will fill in that gap by supplying the much-to-be-desired teacher nurse for this neglected period of childhood.

Under the direction of the school and district physician, the visiting teacher nurse for expectant mothers and infant children will do visiting work in coöperation with the school nurse, the health department and the maternity hospital. Through all these agencies she will discover when the stork may be expected, and she will be ready with advice and, out of her nursing experience, she will be able to show the mother how to bathe, clothe, and otherwise care for her child; how to keep it well and how to prevent it from becoming sick; how to nurse it should it meet with the *accident of sickness*. She will be the hygienic adviser in the home. She will advise the mother about the vaccination of her

child. In the homes of her district she will be the handmaiden of the district physician and the school dentist, to whom she will look for advice and direction. Through her close relations to the family she will learn of the unsanitary conditions about the house, in the shops, factories, working places of the members of the family, and she will refer all of these matters to the properly constituted sanitary authorities for investigation and rectification. She will also, through her relation with the family and with the officers of the public and private places of worship and amusement, find means for bringing to the attention of the proper authorities notice of unsanitary conditions that may exist in any one of them.

The work of the school nurse, the school doctor, the school dentist, the visiting teacher nurse will all be made easier and the results consequently greater when provision is made for opening the school buildings as places of rest and recreation, and as places for social, scientific and political meetings, and when well equipped gymnasias and laboratories are provided in the schools; and when the parks are really made the parks of the whole people, by providing fares within the reach of the workingman, or, what is better, transportation on the street cars *nearly* as free as air. When all these things shall have been done, tuberculosis and the acute contagious diseases will be reduced to a minimum. We will not spend our time nursing the sick, for sickness will be as rare as smallpox in a well vaccinated community, and the money now spent for the care of the sick will be put into institutions for outdoor and indoor recreation, and the balance will be used to keep people well. The above group of functions will doubtless be best perfected by the state or some of its subdivisions.

Private agencies, however, have now their great opportunity; for, as Samuel Hopkins Adams has well said: "It is the duty of private philanthropy to point the way to public responsibility." None of the work of keeping well should be left wholly to private agencies, for theirs is the duty to point the way, to fill the gaps now unprovided for, and as fast as the work of filling in the chinks is accomplished, the work should be handed over to the state. The organization of these various activities makes for the health and happiness of the whole people and naturally falls within the lines of public health and school organization, and it is to these institutions that we must look for the elaboration of a plan for the physical and mental welfare and happiness of the whole people, once private effort has pointed out the way. For in this age of ours it is not to the care of the sick that we should direct our efforts, but to the education for health and happiness of the whole people.

The scheme here outlined may appear at first sight to be both elaborate and expensive. The cost of any plan having for its object prevention of sickness, amelioration of suffering, promotion of happiness, must be balanced against the cost of sickness, suffering, widowhood, and preventable death, and the dip of the balance is far on the side of prevention. In most great cities the frame work of a large part of the plan has already been perfected; it only remains for the activities we have to be joined together into a perfected whole.

In many cities we have established a primitive kind of medical school inspection, and we have made a beginning in school nursing. It now remains for us to build in both directions; to construct a plan for the prevention of disease in children and for the care of children who meet with the accident of sickness, that will result in

the saving of health, the postponement of death, and, therefore, in the prolongation of life and the promotion of happiness; for health is a human asset, sickness an economic loss. To nurse the sick is neither so wise, so humane nor so economic as to health nurse the well. Can we not perfect and extend our scheme for medical school inspection and school health nursing by card indexing for health the physical and psychological values of our children, passing the cards from grade to grade and from school to school; and, school ended, using the card records as certificates for permission to work and for physical permission to enter the high school or college? Is it not just as important that our children should leave school, enter high school or college, go into the store, factory or workshop with certificates of physical and psychical efficiency, as that they should enter the high school or college with certificates of mental efficiency? Ought we not to have a standard of health by which the child is permitted to enter either the primary or secondary schools or the college? If in certain families parents surround their children with all the safeguards for their physical health, and the child or children associating with these guarded children is a disease carrier, has not the time come when the parents who safeguard their child shall ask for protection against those children who are carriers of disease?

We have organized our schools so that school work depends largely upon the ability of pupils to learn lessons. How much do we know of the physical efficiency and physical robustness of these children? The backward child is often a child who cannot breathe because of obstruction in the upper air passages; the anæmic child is anæmic for the same reason. The child who is deficient in his school work is often found to be the



child who cannot see or who cannot hear; who suffers from digestive disturbances or infectious diseases contracted in infancy. Children who come to school are found to suffer from sense and other defects, which it is the duty of the medical school inspector and the nurse to detect and refer to the parent and family physician and to the family dentist before the child can do even the average of good work.

It is necessary, therefore, for us to have a school organization for health, a school doctor who shall be a medical school inspector for health, and who at the same time shall be the health officer of his school district; a school dentist, quite as important as the school doctor, who shall have his chair and equipment in the school, and whose duty it shall be, as far as possible, to keep fillings out of the teeth of children, to keep sound teeth in children's mouths, to do temporary fillings for all children in need of them; and finally a school nurse, whose business it shall be, not to run a second-rate dispensary in the school by attending to cuts, bruises, and verminous heads; but who, as teacher nurse, shall bring the school and the home into closer contact; who shall teach the mother how to care for her child; who, when the doctor says glasses are required for Johnnie, or Mary's ears need treatment, or that Lizzie's teeth need to have the moss removed from them and some temporary fillings put in, will go to the home and explain to the mother the needs of her children, and when necessary take the child to the doctor or dentist and actually see that the necessary work is done.

That the school nurse may become better acquainted with the babies and young children in her school district, let us establish milk stations in the schools during the long summer vacation, where she as visiting nurse to

the babies of the district may learn the needs of the school circle in which she is doing her work. In each group of schools there will have to be established, under the care of a trained psychologist, a special psychological laboratory, for the study of all backward, deficient, and defective children, so that there may be developed from this beginning a laboratory of hygiene and psychology for the study of all *well* children. We are now making our sick children, our deficient, and defectives, and we must, of course, first establish a laboratory for the study of those we have made. Later, as we stop developing defectives, we may then direct our efforts toward the study of those children who exhibit but slight departures from the normal. As a still later piece of work we will have to establish and develop in connection with the health departments a laboratory for the inspection, and finally for the study of the physical and sense values of all the children who apply for permission to work. Let us make not only the birth and pedagogical record a requisite for the child to go to work; but as long as we permit boys and girls in the early adolescent period to enter upon tasks which may be somewhat dangerous for them, let us be sure that physically and psychically they are able to measure up, as shown by the instruments of precision, to the work they are to do.

At the other end of the scheme we are building let us provide a teacher nurse, who, working with the health department, the school, the hospital and various private institutions, shall make the foundation of the whole system by carrying to the expectant mother advice for herself and her unborn child; and when the child comes into the world, let the teacher health nurse be a kind of new godmother, a health godmother, to the infant in its first five or six years of life. Such a

visiting health nurse for infancy would carry to the mother a knowledge of the new hygiene of the child; she would tell the mother about feeding and clothing, bathing and sleep; about the care of the mouth and teeth; the eyes, ears, and nose, and she would see to it that the bodies of little children brought to the school nurse and school doctor were not already stamped with the marks of disease. Such a nurse would remove from us the shame that we as a people now permit our children to contract infantile diseases in their infant years, that we may send them to clinics and hospitals, epileptic colonies and reform schools in later life.

We have done a great deal of work to reform the man; let us do something to form him. We have had a plan for filling our hospitals and clinics with material; here is a scheme for emptying our dispensary waiting rooms and keeping our hospital beds for emergency purposes. It is a scheme by which the school is to become the center around which all health activities revolve. The babies are to grow up into health with the teacher nurse who takes them to school. If their parents are poor, let them get milk and advice from the milk station in the school; if their teeth need attention, let them go to the school dentist in the school; if they need a doctor for health, let them have the advice of the school doctor, who is at the same time the district doctor. Let the school have its attending health doctor to care for the health of the children; the attending school dentist to preserve the teeth of the children; the school nurse to visit the homes and be the handmaiden for health of the doctors. The visiting nurse for infancy and maternity will teach the mother how to care for the infant she is to bear. From earliest infancy until it enters school, the nurse will watch the child grow into health; instruct the

mother in its personal hygiene and teach the mother how to avoid the accident of disease.

Let us do all these things now, and later let us do more of the same kind of preventive work; not only because of our greater sympathy or because of our larger humanitarianism, but also because it is economically more valuable to do so here and now than it is to nurse the sick.

Dr. Norton writes:

One does not have to be very old to remember the time when there were no doctors of dental surgery. At that time the dental operations were performed by the barber or blacksmith, and consisted in merely extracting the tooth. This procedure was known in those days as a "medicinal application of cold steel." These conditions would exist to-day were it not for the ever increasing demand for better care of the teeth, more intelligently applied and more skillfully practiced, a better acquired knowledge intelligently to administer aid to suffering humanity.

It is through this development that it has become generally known that many ills of the entire system are directly traceable to dental lesions. Going still further, it is considered in this day and age a disgrace if one's teeth are not properly cared for. This being the case and the development having been so wonderfully rapid, it is small wonder that the men to whom the knowledge of the importance of this work has come should bear in mind the child whose age and whose environment make it improbable for him to realize the seriousness of his first toothache and the necessity of avoiding it if possible.

It is a fact that the child at this age, that is, primary and grammar school age, or between the ages of six and

fourteen, during which time the permanent teeth erupt, is passing through one of the most important periods in its life and it is especially necessary that every condition be taken into careful consideration. The mouth is the gateway by which one-third or one-half of the disease-causing germs enter the body. It is of vital importance that it be kept clean and in a healthy condition.

All these facts were realized by members of the Rochester Dental Society some thirty years ago, when they established a free dental dispensary at the Rochester City Hospital that people unable to pay for dental services might be treated at this dispensary free of charge. This was maintained by the society with money provided from its treasury, and was carried on by dentists who were members of the Rochester Dental Society donating their services and each working his allotted half day.

The equipment of this first dispensary in Rochester was very meager, consisting of a stand, a barber's chair and what instruments each individual dentist saw fit to take to the infirmary for his own personal use.

This movement lasted for about two years, at which time it went the way of all philanthropic movements, which are born too early for the public mind to receive and which must inevitably fail. Some time after this some of the older members of the society who had in mind this start and its failure, but who realized the importance of the movement itself, again brought the matter to the attention of the society at a meeting, and a committee was appointed to establish a dispensary. It was through the efforts of this committee that Captain Henry C. Lomb of Rochester offered to equip a free dental dispensary if the society would maintain it. His idea was to establish the dispensary in one of the hospitals in the city. However, this was found to be im-

possible, owing to lack of suitable accommodations, and, upon invitation, the dispensary was finally established at the headquarters of the Rochester Public Health Association. A charter was obtained from the New York Board of Charities, and the dispensary formally opened to the public on Washington's Birthday, February 22nd, 1905. Twenty-four members of the society alternated in taking charge of the work, and at first the dispensary was open only two afternoons a week. Soon, however, it was found necessary to open every day, and Mr. Lomb kindly consented to pay the salary of one dentist. At this time the dispensary being the only one in the city and the only place where poor people could obtain dental services, it was necessary to work for all classes; but soon it was found necessary to alienate patients suffering from tuberculosis, and Mr. Lomb kindly volunteered to equip a dental infirmary in the municipal hospital where poor tuberculous patients might receive dental care. Thus it was that the movement of free dental service to the poor children of Rochester first started.

This was practically the condition of our dispensary in this city, when in the fall of 1909 the condition of the teeth of the children in our schools was brought to the attention of the school board by the principal of one of our schools. Miss Edith A. Scott, the principal of No. 14 School (this was the building where the social center movement had begun, and Miss Scott had caught the idea), requested the board of directors of the Dental Society to install a dental dispensary in her school, assuring the society that the board of education would coöperate in so far as to allow the installation of a dispensary, and, should the arrangement be found satisfactory, to coöperate more materially in the future. The directors fully realized the importance of this offer,

and decided to equip a dispensary in No. 14 School. The entire equipment was donated by the manufacturers. One manufacturing company donated equipment to the amount of \$365, others donated similar and less amounts until an equipment valued at \$1,400 was installed.

On Washington's Birthday, 1910, upon the fifth anniversary of the opening of our first dispensary, the one at No. 14 School was formally opened to the public. As upon the former occasion, dentists alternated and gave up their valuable time to start the work. Forty dentists, one attending each afternoon, started this movement. Any one of these forty dentists would gladly have given the money necessary to hire a substitute, but the directors wished to interest as many members of the society in the movement as possible, and it was surprising to note how gladly and quickly dentists volunteered. One practitioner, of middle age, relates the following incident which occurred on his first day at No. 14:

A little patient was placed in the chair whose face was so dirty that the dentist moistened a towel with hot water and soap and thoroughly scrubbed the boy's face. Upon seeing his reflection in a hand glass which was given him, the little patient gasped and exclaimed, "Gee!" This dentist did more good than he realized. The little patient had been placed in the chair expecting to be hurt, instead he met a genial man in a white coat who washed his face. The dentist was so much interested in this little patient that he has watched the boy's progress and has ascertained that through this little fellow's influence, the whole family are being educated in the care of the teeth. His little sisters and brothers are almost as enthusiastic about keeping their teeth clean as he is.



Of the eighteen little patients treated the first week four came from the mentally deficient class. This is significant, illustrating the fact that children who are backward from mental deficiency or from sluggish brain equipment are found to have more or less trouble with their teeth.

This dispensary in our public school has been in operation nearly a year, and so far as actual conditions in the dispensary are concerned they are practically the same as when it was first started. However, during this year there has been unusual and rapid progress in the general movement. Two months after starting the dispensary it was deemed necessary to procure a dentist who would be able to devote his entire time to the work in our dental dispensaries, consequently a committee was appointed and a graduate of the University of Pennsylvania was selected by them for this position. He has devoted his entire time to the work. Forenoons, six days in a week, are given to the work in No. 14 School. Afternoons he is occupied at the first dispensary established.

In the spring of 1910 a committee was appointed from the dental society to consult with the board of education, and, if it met with their approval, to arrange for a series of lectures on oral hygiene to be given to the children in all the public and parochial schools. Dr. John P. Corley, of Sewanee, Tennessee, a member of the Oral Hygiene Committee of the National Dental Association, was selected to deliver these lectures. He began his work on October 25th, 1910, and delivered from two to five lectures a day until the evening of November 11th, at which time the campaign of oral hygiene was brought to its close by a mass meeting held in convention hall. Besides the general public this mass meeting

was attended by 1,200 pupils from the schools. The lectures given by Dr. Corley in the schools were illustrated by the stereopticon and created widespread interest throughout the city. In conjunction with these lectures the Dental Society distributed gratuitously fifty thousand pamphlets on care of teeth to the school children. The expense of this campaign of oral hygiene in the public schools together with the enormous expense of holding the mass meeting was paid by private subscriptions from dentists. During our campaign in the schools, William Hodge, an actor who was playing at the Shubert Theatre in Rochester, upon being recalled, appeared before the curtain and made an unusual offer, that is, that he would give \$1000 to the most worthy cause in Rochester, he having lived in Rochester in his early boyhood days. Several in the city made application for this money, but it was found that the dental dispensary and its work in the city was considered by Mr. Hodge and the mayor to be the most worthy at that time and the money was formally presented to our society by the mayor at the mass meeting. Such interest was aroused in this movement that during the lecture campaign in our schools two individuals offered to furnish the equipment for a dispensary to be opened in another of our public schools.

It is well known that statistics may be had in any quantity regarding the percentage of children in school to whom it is necessary to administer dental aid. For example, of 500 children examined last May and June in New York City, 486 were found to have decayed teeth. In the mouths of these 500 children 2,397 first and second molars were decayed. In Atlanta, Georgia, last year, it was found upon careful examination that sixty out of every one hundred children did

not brush their teeth at all, and that 686 out of 2,375 needed dental treatment. In New York City upon examination it was found that 126,000 required immediate attention by the dentist, and out of 500 pupils taken from different schools for the purpose of statistical examination it was found that only 14 had sound teeth.

Page after page of these statistics can be had, but in our experience here in Rochester it is thought advisable not to compile statistics regarding those who need dental attention, but to ascertain to what extent the faulty dental conditions affect the general health and also the intellectual condition and advancement of the child. To this end that we may be making one step toward solving this vital problem, experiments are now under way here in Rochester, which we hope will bear fruit. A class of twenty-five children has been placed in the hands of a committee appointed for this investigation, and they have started by placing the teeth of these children in perfect condition. Careful and accurate records of their class work for one year in the schools have been looked up, together with careful and accurate records of their work under the present healthful conditions of the mouth. It is, of course, understood that the children keep their teeth in perfect sanitary condition while these experiments are going on. Also, children who are not up to the standard, that is, children who are suffering from adenoids, the mentally deficient, or naturally backward, et cetera, are excluded from this class. It is intended that the children shall be examples of the normal healthy child. Records after careful selection and thorough care will be kept for the period of one year. This work has just been started and we believe will be a step in the right direction.

Men in different parts of the country, who have gone

into this matter thoroughly, realize that in this regard a vast field is opening up. In New York, Dr. Gulick, after some investigation, has made the statement that two defective teeth in the mouth of a child will retard that child in his studies six months.

In New York City alone, should the children's teeth be cared for properly, the result in the saving of money would be enormous. Many million dollars would be saved to the municipality. Briefly explaining this statement: It is generally known that during the summer months, it is necessary to maintain a summer school for the benefit of such children as fail in their spring examinations. The cost of this summer school may be greater or less, according to the number of pupils who are backward. Therefore, anything tending towards the betterment of this condition would, of course, necessarily result in a saving in dollars and cents.

That the authorities of the state of New York are alive to the gravity of this situation and the necessity for coping with this problem has been demonstrated recently by the fact that a department of oral hygiene has been added to the health bureau of the state. Two dentists, Dr. H. L. Wheeler of New York City and Dr. W. A. White of Phelps, New York, a member of the Rochester Dental Society, have been appointed and will take active charge of this department. This is the first step to be made in this direction in the United States. Quoting from the *Dental Cosmos* of January, 1911:

A similar and preceding recognition of the dental hygiene movement was made by the department of public health and charities of the city of Philadelphia, which opened a dispensary for free dental service to the poor children of the city during the first week in September last, which dispen-

sary has been in active and successful operation since its opening, and now maintains a staff of six dental practitioners giving continuous attention to the service during the full working hours of each day in the week.

As a part of the dispensary service plans are now perfected by which, immediately after the holiday recess, the dental condition of fifty thousand school children in Philadelphia will be examined and recorded by a corps of volunteer inspectors recruited from the dental practitioners of Philadelphia. The purpose of this school inspection is not only to determine the existing condition of the teeth of public school children of the city, but to determine from the records the most urgent cases requiring attention and to give them precedence in the order of treatment at the free dental dispensary.

Both the New York appointment of dental lecturers and the free dental dispensary in Philadelphia are interesting as being examples of direct articulation of public dental service with the health departments of states and municipalities.

At the time the oral hygiene movement was started in this city, thirty years ago, laymen and dentists alike were unable to grasp the importance of it. They did not realize the necessity for it, and, in fact, were not ready. Realizing that for thirty years there has been a continued effort to bring the lay mind to the proper understanding of this necessity, we believe that when conditions are such that the city authorities realize what it means to the advancement of the child in the school, how closely the health of the child is associated with its mental advancement, then will the problem of how to manage and conduct the work in connection with the city government be a matter for consideration. Until then it is better to put all energy into bringing about this condition.

## CHAPTER XVIII

### THE SOCIAL CENTER IN THE RURAL COMMUNITY

"Social center development is the only thing that will take the kink out of the rural school." This statement, indicating the cordial attitude on the part of rural school men and women toward this movement, was made by a county school superintendent at the All Southwestern Conference for Social Centers, held at Dallas last February. This meeting, the first of its kind to be called anywhere in this country, demonstrated a unanimous determination to promote the focusing of community activities in and through the school social center as the best practical method of meeting the complex and difficult "country life problem." That conference was arranged by Charles W. Holman, of Dallas, Texas, who, in the following paper, sets forth present rural conditions and their need:

Within the limits of this report an intimate study of the environments and social forces in the country life of the whole nation is both impracticable and impossible. For this reason the writer has chosen the rural problems of the southwest as the problems most nearly representative of the whole nation. In this section already definite movements are on foot for the organization and the development of the social impulse.

Than the southwest no more interesting field can

be found. Its development is one of the remarkable features of a remarkable decade. Its vast territory is being filled rapidly by homeseekers from all parts of the world. The farmer from Washington state has a neighbor from Georgia, and down the road is a family from Maine. The country school is taught by a young lady from Kansas, and the circuit rider came from Tennessee. Here is a small German colony, there is a group of Scandinavians. North and south Europeans are pouring into Texas through the Galveston gateway. Louisiana French are coming across the Sabine. Americanized Europeans and natives are moving from the Central States onto the fertile farms of the southwest. Everywhere is the spirit of change—the invisible battle of conflicting farming methods, religious ideas, political creeds, racial prejudices. The older southern type of southwestern settlers is giving way before the constant stream of new bloods, and more settled ideas of life are being disturbed by the constant friction of ideas from other sections and nations. The children of the southwest have a widely scattered ancestry, and will inherit the traits and sentiments of a hundred nationalities, modified by contact and changed environment.

This modern migration is different from former settlements. It is accompanied by phenomenal material progress. A ranch is opened for settlement. Buyers come by the trainload, and a town is started in a day. In three years this ranch is cut into small farms and is being cultivated by farmers. The same diversity of settlers continues. The new farmers rapidly install rural telephones, erect churches and schoolhouses, and respond readily to the demand for better roads.

Such is the problem as presented to-day. Within ten years the southwest will have no more vacant spots.



Within fifteen years the country will have taken on a mellowness, and will have the general characteristics of almost any section of the United States and will have preserved some of the traits of all.

In the rush and in the struggle for homes, our farmer folk have left themselves poverty-stricken in the matter of intellectual occupation, outside the daily work, and have left no provision for satisfaction of the social instinct. Another important fact in this connection must not be overlooked: The best, rather the most energetic, talent of the country has in all communities been drawn irresistibly to the towns and cities. This has further impoverished the life of the country neighborhoods and made it harder for spontaneous popular effort to gain strength.

But in contrast to this rather unpromising material for social work, comes the hopeful fact that the country people of the southwest are hungry for intellectual training and cultural influences; moreover, they are responding to leadership, wherever that leadership is based upon the sound doctrine of the people keeping busy solving their own problems.

Briefly, then, there is need for social centers in the country life of the southwest, as of other parts, to blend the spirits of the people into harmony, to satisfy the social instinct, to stimulate the intellectual life and to inculcate true ideals of democratic government.

The state of Oklahoma is doing a wonderful work in organizing its boys and girls and in its farmers' institute work. The various civic improvement organizations of Texas have taken up the social center movement, and this fall practically every teachers' institute in Texas and every convention is devoting time to discussion of the social center idea.

So great is the need for organization of country communities that *Farm and Ranch*, the leading agricultural journal of the south, has actively agitated the need through its columns for the last twelve months and devotes all the time of one of its editors to social center propaganda. This journal has opened its columns to a free and full discussion and promulgation of plans. It has also made it possible for every community in the southwest to obtain libraries.

Opinion is unanimous that the schoolhouse is the natural place for the meeting of all the people, and agitation is active to see that new school buildings shall be located with a view to more convenient access by both pupils and parents.

Summarized, we find present-day environments of the farmer in the southwest contain these serious handicaps:

1. The majority of the southwest's rural population supports by taxation a double system of free schools—white and negro—and this burden is borne, in major part, by the whites. There are too many one-teacher schools. Schoolhouses are unfortunately located, poorly equipped and meagerly supported. Teachers are underpaid, and prejudice is a serious handicap to the teacher.

2. Farmers' organizations lack virility. Their membership is limited to a very small percentage of actual farmers.

3. In many sections renters are supplanting the sturdier types of land owners. These renters are, necessarily, of a lower economic order, and cannot give ready response to popular movements.

4. Farm families are geographically isolated, and bad wagon roads make communication at times difficult.

5. There is a general negligence of sanitation for prevention of diseases and purity of water supply. Beautifying home and school grounds and public roads is not given proper attention. And there is often a plentiful lack of good literature within the home.

Other causes could be brought to mind, but are not necessary for the purposes of this paper.

Our imperfect school system has not yet eliminated from the country the illiterate element; neither has it met the cultural or technical needs of country boys and girls. [Instruction in the small country school is often a mere matter of memory lessons.] Bad locations of school buildings have tended further to isolate farmers, by making it hard for them to get together in the community schoolhouses.

In the matter of his organizations, the farmer's weakness engenders in him a failure to appreciate the mutual dependence of all who work on the farm; and renders the one most important class in America almost impotent and at the mercy of those who set the prices on the world's goods. This means economic debility.

As renters increase in a community, enthusiasm declines; and initiative in personal or public endeavor loses the "name of action."

Isolation, accentuated by bad roads, et cetera, has these good and bad results: Farmers tend to become both extremely radical and absurdly conservative, the two predispositions being often paradoxically present in the same character. The farmer's point of view tends to become limited to his vocation and the world represented by his neighborhood. This very isolation, however, develops also a rugged independence, a sturdy self-reliance, and a type of men and women who think deeply and weigh well all questions within their range.

*We must evolve a coöperative democracy, with the social supplanting the individual spirit.*

To do this we must generate enthusiasm and develop leadership in the country. Our progress will be the advance of a people alive to its needs and consciously doing the things necessary for its evolution. We require a vital stimulus and dependable leaders.

We have referred to the intense individualistic spirit of the countryman. Under pioneer conditions that spirit was natural and normal. The tiller of the soil was the nearest approach to the man who was sufficient unto himself. With settlement in an advanced stage, however, with small farms, with practically all available lands yielding to the husbandman, with agriculture manifesting a constant tendency toward specialized effort, it becomes more and more necessary for the farmer to lay aside his early attitude and work in harness for the social good. Such a spirit as was to be praised in 1800 is abnormal and out of harmony in 1910. Yet, is it hard to find countrymen, working with the tools of modern civilization, living in the thoughts of a time that has gone? Can these men readjust their relation to organized society? Can they interpret this readjustment to mean that the highest form of individualism finds its completest expression in social exchange?

Forces are consciously at work transforming the present agricultural class. As an indication, in Texas, a campaign is being prosecuted for creation of a special county board of education, thereby relieving the already overburdened commissioners' court; and for establishment of country high schools, in order to give boys and girls higher educational advantages right at their own doors. Another educational effort is to draw into the office of

county superintendent a man fitted for upbuilding the county school system.

While farmers' organizations are not always of long life, and usually have quickly alternating high and low tides of strength and influence, the never-ceasing attempts at coöperative efforts foretell a day when some giant movement will sweep the country and enable the farmer to voice a determining word concerning the prices of farm commodities. Another important point to notice is that almost every strong farmers' organization admits women to full membership privileges, and entitles them to hold office.

We are modifying isolation by permanent wagon roads, rural telephones, free mail delivery, trolley cars and automobiles. Active agencies for diminishing the effect of distance have already accomplished marvels. The next ten years shall witness miracles. But, for the farm to fulfill its mission, country people must federate the social forces already at work.

The social center for the southwest was first voiced by Mrs. Maggie W. Barry, chairman of the educational committee of the Texas Federation of Women's Clubs, who, at the Denison meeting of that body, mentioned the good accomplished by the Rochester centers, and suggested that the clubs take up the idea in the southwest. This suggestion was adopted, and the 1910 meeting in San Antonio devoted an important part of its program to discussing the feasibility of the idea.

A lecturer has been sent to every teachers' institute that could be reached in Texas last fall and this winter. The writer had the pleasure of explaining the idea to the Oklahoma State Federation of Women's Clubs, and having them endorse and take up active agitation, also

to the Texas Federation of Women's Clubs meeting at San Antonio.

In this way active agitation has made the name social center familiar in three states. It is resulting in prominent educators and community leaders readjusting their programs of community organization, and in trying out plans of work in some communities. The University of Texas has come to recognize the practicability of the social center idea, and is rendering invaluable assistance to the movement by its organized extension work.

The social center problem in rural sections divides into two logical parts: first, the small farming town, surrounded by a dense farm population; and, second, the isolated neighborhood, that must depend upon its own resources. We will deal first with the latter:

The initial requirement will be leadership. It will take a man and a woman. Two are enough to start with. Their qualities of leadership must consist of broad ideals, untiring energy, patience, tact, limiting their guidance only to the point where people think for themselves, yet ever keeping the people alive to this point. It will require constant endeavor, and they must be always "on the job." The two can work wonders with any isolated community.

If the community is split by sect, party or family disputes, the task will be harder than if mere apathy prevails. If the people are conscious of their social need, and are ready to act with competent leaders, the task will be easy. Organization is not troublesome, enthusiasm is not hard to generate; but keeping lighted the fires of social progress is difficult.

To do this the leaders must find a social magnet—a something that will center and hold the interest of the people in the country school. This something must

be material and form the nucleus for the social center institution. The almost unanimous opinion of workers is that the community library, placed in the country school, fulfills this need. It will attract until it takes its rightful place among the other institutions which will compose the social center.

This man and this woman will find as their valuable aids the secretary of the business men's organization in the town to which they are tributary, the local minister, the school teacher, the county superintendent, the government demonstration agent, and always a few enterprising men and women who appreciate the motive and the great results bound to accrue.

If the school building is antedated, the best way to bring the tax payers' attention to this fact is by starting a campaign for a school library. This focuses attention upon the school. Once the library is installed, public interest can be aroused by schoolhouse meetings for the discussion of a special bond issue to build a new and suitable structure to house children and books. A little diplomacy will quell the opposition of those who oppose a new school building. Enthusiasm started among the children will soon reach the necessary fever heat to pass the proposition through the ballot box. Care, now, should be taken to make the school building not only modern but one that can be utilized by a community of much larger growth. If possible, a separate room should be fitted out for library and reading room.

With an attractive school building, and a helpful library, federation of the community becomes a much simpler proposition. The school will be the natural meeting place for the branch of the farmers' union, the boys' corn club, and the Friday night "literary." It is logical and natural for the teacher and the government



agent to organize a school and home garden association among the boys and girls. The fundamental idea of this association will be to make outside surroundings of country life as attractive as possible. Beautifying of home and school grounds will result in beautifying of home and school thoughts.

The woman leader will organize cooking and sewing societies, and a mothers' club. The man leader will organize for better roads and buildings among the men. These interests will unite in parent-teacher and in home and school clubs. We have presented here every needed factor to awaken this community. The next step is coördinating these organizations for civic betterment.

A schedule can be so arranged that the school building will be in use five nights out of the week by separate organizations, and one night out of the week by everybody in the neighborhood. Plans for bringing these associations into harmony with each other and quickening the life of the people are unlimited. For instance, the girls' clubs could entertain the boys' corn clubs. The home and school garden association could give an open program, and its members could tell their parents how to make homes more attractive for children. The farmers' union could hold its open meetings in such a manner as to get the non-members interested in the work the union is trying to accomplish.

For discussion at every public meeting should be themes interesting to the local community. Holders of public offices should be invited to give their answers to questions affecting the public welfare; and these representatives should be thoroughly grilled concerning their positions on issues wherein they voted contrary to the will of their constituents. True democracy and independent, positive thought should be encouraged. The

social center is to be everybody's meeting place and everybody's forum. Speakers can always be secured for the asking; and the secretary of the business men in the next town will gladly send out authorities on farm subjects to address the enterprising community. In such a community these speakers will find eager, willing auditors, earnest, intelligent men and women, who will fill the house to the doors. But these same listeners will follow the speaker with thoughtful discussion of his theme and he will probably find himself in the witness chair before the end of the evening. Who can doubt the benefit of this kind of community organization?

In the small farming town, where almost everyone is directly interested in agriculture, the social center will flourish, because it fills a vital deficiency. Such a town has a serious question to answer in "What shall we do for our boys and girls, to keep them off the streets, and actively engaged in something that will be for their own good, yet attract them?"

Two serious drawbacks to small town life are found in the attitude of the commercial club, and the women's clubs. The one desires to exploit its town to bring in industries; the other is too liable to waste energy and money on idealistic ventures of no practical benefit.

It will be necessary for the commercial club to enroll the farmers of the open country; and for the town women to do the same with their country sisters. If this is not always possible or practicable, the women's clubs and the commercial club can find means to draw the farm population to the town meetings.

A library can be installed, with a reading room open night and day. Boys can be enrolled in athletic classes by the volunteer work of young graduates, who went in for athletics at college. Young women, returned from

college—to fold their hands at home and idle until they are married off—can find useful employment under this plan by becoming auxiliaries to the teaching force, and aids at the open meetings. Such a town could support a lyceum, supplemented by free lectures. Open evenings can be made so attractive that they will always draw crowds. A scheme of organization parallel to that in the isolated community can be used here.

The success of the Hesperia movement warrants our firm belief in social centers for the southwest. Farmersville, Plano, Celeste, Troupe, Normanna, and other small towns of Texas have started this work. A number of isolated communities have consciously gone to work on definite lines of advancement.

Knowledge of conditions leads the writer to believe that the library idea is the one which will be most quickly responded to by the people. This is undoubtedly as great a need as any other. Meeting it will arouse the people to appreciation of the value of coöperation. Through the efforts of *Farm and Ranch*, one hundred communities have already adopted the library plan. The sentiment is growing. Especially does the library plan appeal to the isolated community. It is necessary to agitate for more libraries in the southwest, as a first means of creating social centers.

In concluding, the writer wishes again to say, that the social forces at work in country life will make the farmer of the future a very different being from the farmer of to-day. He further predicts a spread of the social center wave, and its adoption over the whole country; perhaps not in name, but certainly with the same idea. From that getting together of the people will result:

1. A growing spirit of fraternalism.
2. A quickened interest in public welfare.

3. A saner, better-balanced manhood and womanhood, inspired by truly democratic ideals.

4. Ultimate solution of the difficult question of holding farm population on the farms, by making country life so attractive that its possibilities will satisfy the normal instincts of the ambitious man and woman.

## CHAPTER XIX

### THE SOCIAL CENTER AND THE UNIVERSITY

The Social Center is related to the University in two ways. It furnishes the means wherein and where-through the college or university graduate may express the civic and social impulse he has received. And it is the means through which the citizens, by neighborhoods, may continually take advantage of the resources to which they have a right as owners of a university.

"It must be admitted, to our shame," says Woodrow Wilson, "that college men have not borne a very active relationship to public life in this country in the past." What is the reason for this? Chiefly, perhaps, the reason is that the civic spirit which the university fosters in the student is rational and scientific, that is, it is *political*, rather than *partisan*. In the past the college or university graduate has had practically no opportunity to participate in political affairs except by giving up his political independence, coming to *belong* to a party, putting in place of open-eyed, unbiased investigation the acceptance of a platform or creed. The non-partisan, or rather super-partisan, civic impulse of the university graduate has had no sub-partisan political machinery through which it might become effective. The social center, with its basis in the single all-inclusive political organization—the voting body self-organized into a deliberative body—presents an opportunity for political par-

ticipation which is not out of harmony with the university impulse. The social center furnishes the means by which the college or university graduate may, as a citizen, "get the enthusiasm of things to be done." This is the enthusiasm of the common political organization which is the basis of the social center, a different and very much finer enthusiasm than that of any partisan organization.

But, while the value of the social center as the machinery through which the civic impulse of the university may be expressed by the participation of the graduate is of the highest importance, the value of this institution as the means whereby the social, fellowship impulse of the university may be conserved and democratized is also very important. This spirit of "good fellows together" of undergraduate life has tended to find its expression among college and university men after their graduation in the establishment of exclusive fellowships, university clubs, et cetera. For even the small percentage of graduates who become members of such organizations, they fail entirely to satisfy the larger fellowship impulse. Now the social center furnishes in the local community to which the man or woman goes from the university not only the most effective machinery for political participation, but also the opportunity for the expression of the largest and finest social impulse which university life has awakened and fostered. The social impulse, the group spirit, is a by-product of student association in university or college. Of the "fraternity" organizations within the university or college, the awakening of this impulse, the development of this spirit, is the chief object. If the little artificial "fraternity" organization does not serve as a training place of the fraternal spirit which is to find its true expression in the common life of society, then the undergraduate "fraternity" has no excuse for exist-

ence, at any rate in a publicly supported institution. The social center in each community is the local chapter house of the all-inclusive American fraternity, for which every exclusive "fraternity" organization is, of right, an artificial fostering school.

The above consideration of the social center in its relation to the university or college applies equally to the private or public institution of high education. The following, and even more important, consideration applies to the social center in its relation to the state university. One may not say that—what the social center is to the neighborhood the state university is to the commonwealth; because the state university is not the civic headquarters: the state house or capitol is that. But where, as in Wisconsin, and now in Kansas and other states, the university is conceived of, not as a shrine wherein the lamp of knowledge, kept ever burning, is attended by devotees of abstract truth who gather there, but as a light and power plant serving all the state, the social center in each neighborhood becomes the place of constant connection of each local community with the central institution. The system through which the larger resources of the university are made available for individuals and groups in the local communities is known in Wisconsin and in the other states in which Wisconsin's method is being followed as the University Extension Division. It is through the University Extension Division that the state becomes the campus of the university.

The remarkable development of University Extension in Wisconsin has been very largely due to the clear vision and practical engineering skill of Dr. Louis E. Reber, Dean of the Extension Division. Dr. Reber here sets forth the program of increased University Extension



service which is made possible through local social center organization.

The state university is a public service corporation. It is supported by the public, presumably *for* the public. Until within comparatively recent years, few questions have been asked as to the quality and comprehensiveness of the service offered by the university to this constituency, but the time has arrived when not only educators, but intelligent laymen, including both employer and employed, are asking to what degree the relation of the people as a whole to the educational system has been recognized either in the construction of its curriculum or in the dissemination of its benefits.

What proportion of the young folk who become high school students are served in future years by the university? What proportion of those who remain in school for elementary training only reap more than the most meager benefits from our so-called popular education?

The high average percentage of illiteracy in the United States, the low comparative degree of efficiency in the industries, and the avidity with which opportunities for further education are embraced by persons who have completed their formal education, all point to a fault in the existing system for which there is at present no generally adopted remedy.

It is not necessary to dwell upon the shortcomings of our public education, nor to emphasize the fact that figures relating to school attendance would change greatly for the better if the value of training for efficiency were recognized in our public schools. The awakening to the need of a thoroughly reorganized system of education is quite general, and the time is doubtless not far

distant when the work of the schools will be so differentiated, after the earliest grades, as to offer equal opportunities for effective training to the future artisan and to the future professional man. In the meantime, the stability of our institutions is threatened by the increasing number of the uneducated or the helplessly educated who crowd the large cities, and drift from place to place through the country.

Reorganized methods in the common schools, continuation schools, trade schools, and apprenticeship courses are all directed toward provision of the needed remedy, but under present conditions are sorely inadequate to meet the situation. In this field, then, university extension may find a large usefulness.

There is much to be said in favor of a policy which carries the university to these people who cannot come to it. A measure presenting such immense possibilities of usefulness would seem to belong as an organic part to the state educational system. The work requires assured and liberal support in order to secure permanence of establishment and growth, and its central offices, for reasons of economy and convenience, should be placed where the material equipment, research foundations and instructional force of the great head of the state system may become available for its use. Although this close affiliation with the intra-mural processes of the university is important, it should not be understood that extension instruction shall be limited to courses of study of university grade, nor even that it shall conform necessarily to any conventional schedule of studies. The present range of extension activities, as interpreted by an increasingly large number of colleges and universities, is held to include not only such courses as entitle the student to credit toward university or advanced degree,

school teacher's diploma, or other certified recognition, but also short courses and conferences not leading to a degree, and the promotion of a great variety of interests that reach the people, both young and old, in the intimate relations of their daily life.

In this breadth of scope is seen the vital spirit that animates the new conception of university extension—the spirit of boundless liberality which would make useful to the entire people, in whatever place, in whatever walk of life, that great fund of knowledge which accumulates and is available at a university—be it the product of research, scholarship, or of great gifts of mind and heart.

Having conceded the point that the state university is the natural and proper guardian of the educational interests of the whole people of the state, existing under an obligation to those who cannot enter her walls fully equal to that she owes to her resident study body, there arises the paramount question of method by which every part of the state shall be reached by the university without duplication of machinery, yet effectively and thoroughly. It is probable that no method can be absolutely successful which does not involve division of the state into districts having local headquarters, from each of which the various activities of extension shall be promoted within the limits of its territory. The organization may then be compared to a great wheel, of which the hub is the university, the rim the boundaries of the state, and the spokes the lines which divide the whole into districts.

At the hub, or central headquarters, will be located the dean, director, or extension committee, the several secretaries of departments, and the specialists who offer lecture courses, prepare correspondence—study lessons,

publish bulletins designed to aid the student in the study of topics for debate, or gather, classify, and, if necessary, edit instructive literature dealing with subjects useful to the student as a private individual, or as a citizen of state or municipality.

In the districts, superintendents, field organizers, and local teachers coming into immediate contact with the people whom the university would serve, will be enabled to apply the benefits of university extension to their specific needs. Here, again, the working plant of the public educational institution may be of use in the provision of suitable class rooms, lecture halls, laboratories, and club rooms.

A seemingly insurmountable obstacle to the spread of university extension in rural communities or villages has existed, heretofore, in the apparent lack of public gathering places and other facilities for the meeting of groups for study. Though criticism of our failure to utilize our school plants to their fullest capacity is not new, yet it is only with the comparatively recent use of the schoolhouse as a social center that the tremendous possibilities latent in the out-of-school hour service, have come to be generally recognized. From the civic, social, and recreational uses, in themselves indirectly educational, to direct educational applications has been a natural step, and the community gatherings at the schoolhouse center are natural assemblers of the elements of study groups.

In the coming civic clubs, which are, or should be, holding evening sessions in schoolhouses all over the country, are thousands of young men whose education has ended with graduation from the high school. Among these, many, if offered the chance, would avail themselves of the opportunity to continue their studies

with the object either of improving their vocational proficiency or of acquiring credit toward a university education, with the hope of completing a course of study in future residence at the institution. These are frequently youths of sturdy frame and manly qualities, worthy of the best the state can give them, but denied the benefit of further advantages than the very meager training of the small village or rural school. The circumstances of their lives in too many instances forbid progress, and its inevitable converse, deterioration, frequently becomes their lot. That they should be rescued from this condition, at however great a cost of effort and expense on the part of the government for altruistic reasons alone, is evident, but in this day the fact is acknowledged that education for efficiency pays, not only in returns to the individual, but also to the state. It is recognized that every child taken from school and put to work without further opportunity for education represents almost invariably a ruined life and always a loss in dollars and cents to the commonwealth.

This view of the situation rarely occurs to the young worker, and even when the conclusion is forced upon him that he must inevitably be left behind in the race with his trained companion, he seldom knows how to improve his condition, and the only result of his observation is bitterness of spirit and discouragement.

To such a one the offer of training applicable to his needs, direct from the university, at no greater cost than his means will afford, under such conditions as leave him free to continue earning a livelihood and taking him no farther afield than to the nearest schoolhouse, comes as a solution of difficulties as vital as life itself.

In speaking thus of the needs of a large class of the youth of our country, young folk who are passing

through the critical period of the formative years of their existence, an important possible service of university extension in coöperation with other educational agencies throughout the state, has been suggested. This is but one of the many uses of university extension for people remote from direct university influences.

In the development of educational activities in public school centers, the requirements of all classes of persons, of every individual, may be considered. These activities may include correspondence study courses in conjunction with class work, lecture courses, illustrated by lantern slides, or motion pictures, lists of referred readings for the study of given subjects for general information or debate, bulletins presenting briefs dealing with questions of the day, package libraries containing material for study in the absence of local libraries, apparatus for experimental tests, coöperation in special movements, expert advice in matters relating to sane and healthy living, et cetera. The enumeration fails to convey an adequate conception of the significance of the aid and guidance that may be claimed from the university through the agency of the extension division working in the school center. It will be seen, however, that through this instrumentality the student may receive assistance in preparing himself for advanced standing in school or university, the worker may improve his vocational proficiency, the citizen may inform himself upon matters relating to improved conditions in his home, in his community or in his state, and all may receive a stimulus to effort that will result in better conditions of life and make us a happier, stronger, and more intelligent people.

## CHAPTER XX

### THE MAGNIFIED SCHOOL

The final question regarding the project of making the schoolhouse the headquarters of the district voting body, self-organized into a deliberative body, and then the center of such community expression as the neighboring citizens may desire to focus there, is the effect which this increased use of the building will have upon the school in its primary function as the institution of children's education. This is the ultimate and deciding question, not only because the use of the schoolhouse for the education of children "was there first," but because this use is inherently of such importance that if social center development were to mean injury to the school in this prime service, no arguments in its favor would counterbalance this single argument against it. That the exact opposite of injury to the primary service of the school results from social center development—that this wider use, not merely does not interfere with, but powerfully aids the school in its primary service—explains the unanimous endorsement of this movement by such bodies as the National Education Association, and the willingness to coöperate, which may everywhere be expected on the part of school trustees, superintendents, principals and teachers.

In the paper which Dr. Edward C. Elliott, Professor of Education in the University of Wisconsin, has fur-



nished upon the ways in which social center development contributes to the efficiency of the primary service of the schoolhouse, he uses the term which heads this chapter—The Magnified School—to designate the social center. A few years ago to call the democratically based and completely developed community institution a “school” would have been to suggest that in their use of this neighborhood building adult citizens were to give up their sovereignty and come under the authority of a teacher. Recognizing the danger that lay in that paternalistic conception of the term “school,” Professor George M. Forbes, President of the Rochester Board of Education, clearly and strongly differentiated between the “school” and the wider uses of the neighborhood building. But we are very rapidly coming to enlarge our conception of the meaning of the word. For instance, a member of the Wisconsin State Legislature, addressing a gathering of citizens in a social center, spoke of the state house as “the school which the legislators attend,” and described the basic idea of the social center in practically the same terms which President Wilson has used, as being “the going to school to one another of citizens in each district for the understanding of public questions.”

This use of the term “school” is made by John Stuart Mill, when, in his “Representative Government,” he describes the essential civic character of the institution of democracy which is realized in the social center. He says: “There is no difficulty in showing that the ideally best form of government is that in which the sovereignty or supreme controlling power in the last resort is vested in the entire aggregate of the community; every citizen not only having a voice in the exercise of that ultimate sovereignty, but being at least occasionally

called on to take an actual part in the government.  
\* \* \* It is a great discouragement to an individual  
\* \* \* to be reduced to plead from outside the door  
to the arbiters of their destiny, not taken into consultation  
within. \* \* \* What is still more important than  
even this matter of feeling is the practical discipline  
which the character obtains from the occasional demand  
made upon the citizens to exercise \* \* \* some so-  
cial function. It is not sufficiently considered how little  
there is in most men's ordinary life to give any largeness  
either to their conceptions or to their sentiments. Their  
work is a routine, not a labor of love, but of self-interest  
in the most elementary form, the satisfaction of daily  
wants; neither the thing done nor the process of doing  
it introduces the mind to thoughts or feelings extend-  
ing beyond individuals; if instructive books are within  
their reach, there is not stimulus to read them; and in  
most cases the individual has not access to any person  
of cultivation much superior to his own. Giving him  
something to do for the public supplies, in a measure,  
all these deficiencies. If circumstances allow the amount  
of public duty assigned him to be considerable, it makes  
him an educated man. \* \* \*

"Still more salutary is the moral part of the instruc-  
tion afforded by the participation of the private citizen  
\* \* \* in public functions. He is called upon while  
so engaged to weigh interest not his own, to be guided  
in case of conflicting claims by another rule than his  
private partialities; to apply, at every turn, principles  
and maxims which have for their reason of existence the  
common good. He is made to feel himself one of the  
public. \* \* \*

"Where this *school* of public spirit does not exist  
scarcely any sense is entertained that private persons

\* \* \* owe any duties to society, except to obey the laws and submit to the government. There is no unselfish identification with the public. Every thought or feeling, either of interest or of duty, is absorbed in the individual and in the family. The man never thinks of any collective interests, of any objects to be purchased jointly with others, but only in competition with them, and in some measure at their expense. A neighbor not being an ally or any associate, since he is never engaged in any common undertaking for joint benefit, is, therefore, only a rival. Thus, even private morality suffers, while public is actually extinct."

A very striking illustration of the way in which this conception of democracy is coming to common recognition and practical expression was given during the recent presidential campaign. The chairmen of the three leading national party committees had sent a joint request to the New York Board of Education that arrangements be made for the use of the schoolhouses in that city as polling places and as common pre-election meeting places. This request had been referred to the committee on the wider use of schoolhouses, of which Commissioner Herman A. Metz, formerly city comptroller, was chairman. At the next meeting of the board this committee recommended favorable action upon this request. Immediately one of the commissioners called upon his colleagues to "kill that proposition," stating as the reason why it should be "killed" that: "The schoolhouses were built for education, and they'll not be used for politics." In reply General George Wingate, one of the oldest members of the board, said: "I agree with the commissioner's statement that the schoolhouses were built for education—and *politics is education*, and the appropriate place for political expression is, therefore, the schoolhouse."

It is in this larger sense of the common institution which serves the adult political, recreational, social self-education of the community, as well as the instruction of children, that Professor Elliott uses the term "school," as he considers the advantage to the one-third use that we have been making which will come with the full development of the characteristic institution of America:

In what ways is it possible for the public school social center movement to contribute to the improvement of those activities which the school regularly undertakes in the performance of its duty of educating children? This is the question that has been submitted to me for a brief reply. Thus far, it would appear that the campaign to magnify the school and to increase its usefulness for the common good has been carried on with particular reference to that portion of our population—adults and youth—outside of the field of the normal, direct influence of public education. Moreover, the principal concern has been with those new forms and forces of education and recreation, the inherent social value of which has only lately been recognized. Even a general consideration of the whole matter brings to light the fact that the larger and more conscious economy in the use of the school building and equipment must inevitably result in the utilization by the school of all of the later agencies for popular education. The school child, as well as the working adult, will become the beneficiary of the new education of our citizenship. The conception of the school as the broadest and most comprehensive of our social institutions means a larger conception of the school as an educational institution.

The following items have been selected for special con-

sideration, not only because they represent the most profitable by-products of the expansion of the public school into a social, civic, community center, but also because they are apt to be omitted from the customary, casual enumeration of advantages. Quite obviously, even a partial performance of the manifold activities included within the program of the school as a social center will bring to the school itself a large increment of opportunity for the effective teaching of children. The gymnasium, the indoor and outdoor play space for day and evening use, the vacation school, the evening school, the classes in manual arts and domestic science, the library, the illustrated lecture, cannot be disconnected from the organized work of the day school. If the movement accomplishes nothing more than to attract public attention to the necessity and worth of *education through action*, it will have served no mean end. There is not in the country to-day a city or rural school the nominated functions of which would not be better performed as a result of this movement, if for no other reason than through the increased material equipment which the socialized school will have.

There is one fundamental form of public school betterment that may be suggested here parenthetically; the improvement of the public school building itself. In spite of the millions spent, and the millions spending, the great majority of schoolhouses, in city and country alike, are lamentably deficient in providing a material surrounding in which may be effectively conserved and developed the physical, civic, economic, and spiritual capacity of children. Neither the social reform through the school stimulated by the movement here represented nor the educational reform of the school advocated to-day will come to pass until public financiers and school

architects give a larger content and a more adaptable form to our structures used for school purposes. On the physical, hygienic side much progress has been made in recent years; for the increase of civic, economic, and spiritual service scarcely a beginning has yet been attempted.

*First.* The magnified school (this term appearing to me to connote most appropriately the aim of the larger movement under consideration) will provide a fit time and place for the meeting of parent and teacher. The tragic consequences in our education of the alienation of the home from the school are being borne in upon us more and more. Any method or means that will substitute for the existing indifference of the home a positive and abiding interest in the work of the school, and that will also permit the school to regulate its efforts in accordance with the special conditions to which the home holds the key, opens the way for the accomplishment of a much higher educational efficiency than now generally obtains. Teacher and parent need greater opportunity for natural communion. Under present conditions, these two potent, controlling factors in the education of the child endeavor to coöperate only in cases of emergency and under circumstances, which, at the best, are artificial. The visits of the teacher to the home, however much gain and increase in harmony it may result in, rarely avoid the semblance of condescension, intrusion, or formality. The visit of the mother to the school during its session, good in manifold ways as such a visit is, whether as an ordinary or an extraordinary event, does not give chance for freedom of communication between parent and teacher and for fullness of understanding of the common problem. And, what is more important, the father, under the existing régime, is perforce a

dummy director on the board of control of the child's education.

Nearly four score years ago a Frenchman, wise beyond his generation, gave an interpretation of our democracy that, for its insight and sympathy, has not been surpassed. Therein he says, "If, then, there be a subject upon which a democratic people is peculiarly liable to abandon itself, blindly and extravagantly, to general ideas, the best corrective that can be used will be to make that subject a part of the daily practical occupation of that people. The people will then be compelled to enter upon its details, and the details will teach them the weak points of the theory \* \* \* " That blindness and extravagance in general ideas about education has been one of the cardinal faults of our democracy may not be gainsaid. That there is great need for a more careful study of the details of the public schools by our citizenship, especially the citizenship that is composed of parents, is pressing, if not apparent.

The bulk of our people require a better insight into the workings and purposes of all grades of public schools. Demands in that quarter are, however, no greater than the urgency of larger and more complete understanding of the people by the teachers of the schools. Were I a benevolent monarch of our educational system, I would decree that every public school should be kept open throughout one evening of each week, and that every teacher should be on duty to meet father and mother for the face-to-face discussion of those individual problems of the welfare of the children presented to every family. More than this, I would prescribe that none unable or unwilling to further such an enterprise of coöperation should be qualified as a teacher. And yet more, I would impose upon parents,



the fathers in particular, the responsibility of carrying out their proper share of the plan. In truth, though, as long as the parents may not be compelled to enter upon the essential details of the child's school education, a favorable opportunity to do so should not be denied them. The parent-teacher organizations which are now becoming more general throughout the country represent a move in the right direction. At the best the associations are too restricted in their membership, and too formal in their proceedings. We need something far more comprehensive, something which in operation lends itself more readily to meeting the interests and complicated relationship of the school and the home. The school neighborhood activities that form the core of the social center movement constitute the firmest foundation for a new and yet unknown educational solidarity.

*Second.* The magnified school will afford ways and means for pupils, especially high school pupils, to accomplish that individual and independent study which should form the necessary part of any effective and complete school training. Teachers, as a class, are now busying themselves with the problem of how children study, how they conduct and control their intellectual occupations; and a lot is being discovered that accounts for the fruitlessness of much of the ordinary work of the school. Above all, it is now widely recognized that any successful economical self-acquirement by school pupils—which is study—demands method and favorable environment. Recent experience in many localities demonstrates without question that the utilization of the school for the purposes of so-called "home study" gives that study a value which it does not now possess. The testimony of District Superintendent E. E. Whitney, of New York,

on this whole issue is pertinent and illustrative of the larger thought in mind:

The study rooms fulfilled their missions far better than formerly. They were opened in every center, with an average attendance of 1,256. The majority of pupils came from the seventh and eighth grades, which are always overcrowded. Hundreds of children too timid to ask questions in the classroom and handicapped for want of quiet places to study cannot advance from this point without assistance. Each principal endeavored to ascertain facts about the home environment, and the statistics collected verified the seemingly extravagant statements regarding crowded tenements. Excellent teachers are assigned to these rooms; they encouraged questions, explained difficulties and provided reference books. Many children with tearful eyes expressed joy at being able because of their help to receive an "A" mark on report cards. (1909.)

The public school itself, as a rule, attempts to do too much for the child. The need is for provisions for the child to do for himself.

*Third.* The magnified school will permit the inclusion, within the school education of the child, of a number of invaluable supplementary means for making the instruction of the school less formal, and more in accord with the nature of the learning human being. The festival, the dramatic presentation, the story telling, the visual instruction through the stereopticon and moving pictures, the phonograph, all now employed as means of recreation and amusement, will have their real educative possibilities brought to the fore. The education of the future is not, if the signs and science of the present are not leading us astray, to be dominated by the printed book and the spoken voice. Other instruments for stim-

ulation to activity and for influencing right conduct may and can be used to an advantage. The experience of the larger world in these respects is teaching a valuable lesson to the school.

*Fourth.* The magnified school will bring within its walls the doers of the world's work, the artisan and the merchant who will, in accordance with the needs of the busy practical life outside of the school, help us of the school to do that which should be done, and leave undone those things which should not be done. There is scarcely a subject in the curriculum of the elementary school program, to say nothing of the secondary school, that would not be the gainer by being made to strike fire on the flint of the world. Perhaps, too, the world may gain by this process. The work of the school is not so simple as it seems. Moreover, in this day of the unmistakable tendency toward the vocationalizing of the public school there exists a double necessity of constant contact with the constructive and productive members of the social organization.

*Fifth.* The magnified school, more than any other agency that may be indicated, will cause the preëminent problems of moral and civic education to stand out in proper perspective. Nine-tenths—one may be fair—of the so-called instruction that aims to make for healthy, active standards of citizenship is devoted to the mouth-ing of the mere form of civic existence. Vital instruction in the civic virtues means contact with the real pulsating civic life. The citizenship of the future must be trained in the civic forums of to-day. And the civic forum contemplated in the organization of the social center gives more promise of contributing virility and strength to civic education than any effort that has sought to bulwark political institutions since the days when the

Athenian boy became a Greek through vitalizing contact with the life of his elders and the Roman boy was educated with and by Roman citizens.

Closely linked with civic education is the more fundamental moral education. Any detailed exposition of the possibilities of the expanded school is impossible at this time. It is enough to say that the school is learning that ethics and morals, to be effectively taught, must employ those channels of influence that have been found to be necessary in other subjects. Words and formularies will not be effective. The school must dig deeper if it wishes to reach those strata of human nature out of which comes the richness of a national conduct.

As with all the other of the epoch-making discoveries of the nineteenth century we are now becoming aware of the new possibilities and of the wide fields of usefulness of the public school. In this respect the energy of education is comparable to that of steam, of electricity, of water, or of chemical reaction. The transformation of the latent forces of the school into kinetic social activities that may be directly utilized for the larger common betterment is no longer a matter of verbal speculation; the process is going on all about us, and the efforts to accelerate it and to increase the value and number of its products are becoming each year more conscious and more evident.

For several decades, competent judges and keen observers of American life and institutions, especially those from abroad, have repeatedly called attention to the extravagances and conspicuous lacks of sensible economy that characterize all of our doings. The national guilt of waste is being gradually borne in upon us, and the vow of conservation has been inserted in the creed of progress. The consciousness of the evils of the wastage

of material things is being succeeded by a sharp realization of the evils of the wastage of spiritual things. *This, as I understand it, is the underlying motive of the movement to expand the school into a center for community activity.*

This later and larger conception of the function of the public school is the product of a century's experience with public education. The nineteenth century was ushered in with a prevailing sentimental humanitarian notion of the education of the people. The children of the unfortunate and the needy were to be supplied, in a paternalistic manner, with their minimum wants. This was the day of the charity school, of worthy, though condescending, educational philanthropy, and of the numerous attempts to educate the masses through cheap, mechanical, and automatically operated devices for instruction. The building of the foundations of the public school for the children of a democratic people will remain as an enduring monument to the faith and courage of the pioneers of a new civilization. The completion of the superstructure of this school remains yet to be accomplished. How and in what manner is writ large in the contemporary development of public education.

The original constitution of the public school was dominated by the individualism which was inherited from a score of generations of the class education of the mother countries. It was fashioned to meet the elementary needs of a child. The twentieth century public school has begun to discard its individualism for a broader principle of socialization. It has begun to extend the boundaries of its sovereignty so as to include not only the whole of the territory of childhood, but that of adulthood as well. It already exercises suzerainty

in those spheres over which, not long since, other great human institutions held sway. The decline of the influence of the family, of the church, of the workshop, and of the major nationalizing traditions has meant the increase of the domain of the school. And as the school extends the frontier of education, thereby enlarging its service to the common good, it will, of necessity, turn its attention inward and utilize the external good for its internal improvement. It is being designed to meet the completer needs, not only of the child, but of the *children*.





## APPENDIX

### *Suggested Constitution of the Neighborhood Civic Club*

#### PREAMBLE

WHEREAS, We, the citizens of —— precinct (or district) of —— town (or city) are now united in one political organization as members of the voting body, and

WHEREAS, The responsibility for voting demands organized preliminary deliberation, and

WHEREAS, The public school building affords the appropriate and convenient headquarters for the meetings of the district voting body, self-organized as a deliberative body:

THEREFORE, We, the citizens of —— precinct (or district) of —— town (or city) do constitute ourselves a deliberative organization or NEIGHBORHOOD CIVIC CLUB, to hold meetings in the public school building for the open presentation and free discussion of public questions and for such other civic, social and recreational activities as give promise of common benefit.

For the better government of the same, we do adopt the following CONSTITUTION:

#### ARTICLE I

##### NAME

The name of this society shall be the NEIGHBORHOOD CIVIC CLUB, meeting in —— school.

## ARTICLE II

## OBJECT

The object of this organization shall be the development of intelligent public spirit through the holding of meetings in the school building, in which there is the open presentation and free discussion of public questions, and such other activities as shall promote the welfare of this neighborhood.

## ARTICLE III

## MEMBERSHIP

Section I. *Members*: Every qualified voter living in the —— precinct (or district) of —— town (or city) is a member of this NEIGHBORHOOD CIVIC CLUB.

Section II. *Associate Members*: Every person not a qualified voter, twenty-one years of age or over, living in this district is an associate member of this NEIGHBORHOOD CIVIC CLUB, with full right to participate in the deliberations of this body.

## ARTICLE IV

## OFFICERS

There shall be seven elected officers of this Club, namely, President, four Vice-Presidents, a Secretary, and a Treasurer.

## ARTICLE V

## ELECTION OF OFFICERS

All of the officers shall be elected at the annual meeting of the Club, which shall be held on ——, to serve for a term of one year each.

## ARTICLE VI

## DUTIES OF OFFICERS

Section I. *President*: It shall be the duty of the President to preside at all meetings of the Club and also to serve as chairman of the Executive Committee of the Club.

Section II. *First Vice-President*: It shall be the duty of the First Vice-President to preside at the meetings of the Club in the absence, or at the request, of the President.

Section III. *Second Vice-President*: It shall be the duty of the Second Vice-President to serve as chairman of the Program Committee of the Club.

Section IV. *Third Vice-President*: It shall be the duty of the Third Vice-President to serve as chairman of the Legislative and Improvement Committee of the Club.

Section V. *Fourth Vice-President*: It shall be the duty of the Fourth Vice-President to serve as chairman of the Social Committee of the Club.

Section VI. *Secretary*: It shall be the duty of the Secretary of the Club to keep the minutes of the proceedings of this Club in a book—the property of the Club—to keep a list of active members, to receive additions to this list, to carry on the correspondence of the Club, and to fulfill such other duties as usually pertain to this office.

Section VII. *Treasurer*: It shall be the duty of the Treasurer to handle the money of this Club, to make all collections for the expenses of the Club, to keep a record of all moneys received, spent, and on hand, and to report upon the state of the treasury whenever called upon to do so.

## ARTICLE VII

## COMMITTEES

There shall be four committees of the Club, namely, the Executive Committee, the Program Committee, the Legislative and Improvement Committee, and the Social Committee.

## ARTICLE VIII

## DUTIES OF COMMITTEES

Section I. *Executive Committee*: The Executive Committee shall consist of the elected officers of the Club. It shall be the duty of this committee to confer upon questions regarding the welfare of the Club, to consider and recommend matters of importance to the Club, and in unusual matters requiring haste to act for the Club.

Section II. *Program Committee*: The Program Committee shall consist of the Second Vice-President and four other members chosen by him. It shall be the duty of the committee to arrange programs for all of the meetings of the Club, to secure speakers, and to suggest topics of discussion which shall assure live, interesting, and profitable meetings.

Section III. *Legislative and Improvement Committee*: The Legislative and Improvement Committee shall consist of the Third Vice-President and four members chosen by him. It shall be the duty of this committee to investigate all matters recommended for legislation and all questions of local improvement which may be referred to it by the Club, also to suggest matters upon which the Club should act.

Section IV. *Social Committee*: The Social Committee shall consist of the Fourth Vice-President and four other members appointed by him. It shall be the duty of the Social Committee to promote neighborhood hospitality, through the arrangement of such special programs, entertainments, serving of refreshments or other social features as the Club may from time to time direct or desire.

## ARTICLE IX

## MEETINGS

The Club shall hold a regular meeting each ——— evening in the ——— room in the ——— school, between 7:30 and 10:00 P. M.

## ARTICLE X

## DUES

There shall be no regular dues of this Club. Members of the club may contribute ——— cents per year to pay the expense of sending notices of the meetings of the Club and such other incidental expenses as may be incurred.

## ARTICLE XI

## QUORUM

Ten active members of the Club shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of all business.

## ARTICLE XII

## AMENDMENTS

This constitution may be altered or amended by a two-thirds vote of the members present at any regular meeting.

## BY-LAWS AND ORDER OF BUSINESS

BY-LAW I. The meeting shall be called to order by eight o'clock or earlier, so that the business routine may be disposed of and the speaker of the evening may be introduced not later than fifteen minutes past eight.

The main address shall be finished and the subject of the evening thrown open for general discussion at or before nine o'clock.

This discussion shall last not longer than three-quarters of an hour, and should close with a ten-minute opportunity for the speaker to sum up the discussion and to answer questions.

BY-LAW II. The chairman of the meeting shall leave the chair in order to engage in discussion.

BY-LAW III. In speaking from the floor in the open discussion which follows the main address, the parliamentary rules of addressing the chair, etc., shall be strictly followed.

BY-LAW IV. Speeches from the floor are limited to five minutes and the time may be extended only by unanimous consent.

BY-LAW V. No speaker may have the floor a second time unless all others who wish to speak have had opportunity to do so.

BY-LAW VI. Speeches from the floor must deal with the subject chosen for discussion.

Order of Business:

- I. Call to order.
- II. Minutes of previous meeting.
- III. Report of standing committees.
- IV. Report of special committees.
- V. Treasurer's report.
- VI. Unfinished business.
- VII. New business.
- VIII. Special program.
- IX. Discussion.
- X. Adjournment.

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